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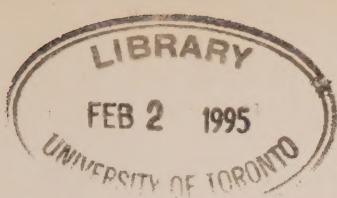
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THE SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS  
OF  
PUBLIC HOUSING  
IN  
METROPOLITAN TORONTO

The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority

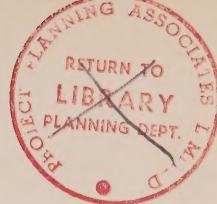
August 1963

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the University of Toronto by  
Derek J. W. Little  
President, Municipal Planning  
Consultants Co. Ltd.*





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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This study, like any other research study is not the work of one person. Many minds and many hands are necessary to produce research in any depth at all.

The author would like to thank the members of the Research Committee of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, Mrs. Theresa Falkner, Dr. Albert Rose, Mr. H. Wm. Tate and Mr. W. H. Clark for their guidance and constructive criticism. The Executive Director of the Authority, Mr. P. E. H. Brady, and the then Secretary of the Authority, Mr. E. J. Whaley, gave invaluable editorial assistance as well as supplying useful comments and criticism.

Two interviewers, Miss Lynn Proctor and Mr. Lutz Luedcke, worked diligently and accurately in carrying out the many necessary interviews. Without their questioning minds and helpful suggestions the interview schedule could not have been developed or analyzed.

The stenographic staff who patiently typed the many drafts of this report and who checked the data and grammar should be recognized. Without the work of Mrs. Dolores DeAcetis, Miss Margaret Aboud and Miss Katherine Stefanchik, this study could not have been brought to a successful conclusion.

The financial support of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Housing Branch, Department of Economics and Development, Province of Ontario and the Metropolitan Toronto Council made this research possible. Thanks are also due to officials of those agencies and governments such as Mr. Humphrey Carver and Mr. Donald Patterson who patiently read the manuscript and provided useful criticism.

Any errors of fact or interpretation are clearly those of the author.

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Paul Ringer.

Toronto, Ontario  
1963





## SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PUBLIC HOUSING IN METROPOLITAN TORONTO

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CHAPTER 1: PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

As stated in the agreement between Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority:

".... the Housing Authority will .... undertake a study to examine and assess:-

(a) the type of families that obtain public housing accommodation in the Metropolitan Toronto area.

(b) the rate of turndown of applicants and the reasons for refusal of accommodation.

(c) the location of families that either leave such public housing accommodation or that refuse such accommodation.

(d) the length of time during which families remain in public housing accommodation and their reasons for leaving.

(e) the social implications of families that have left public housing voluntarily as compared to those who have been evicted or that left without notice."

Although generally speaking the focus of this study is fairly represented in the quoted statement it became obvious that some of the points were expanded while others were given less emphasis. For example, for the purposes of this study public housing families will be described and evaluated on such basis as family size and composition, family income, etc. The same will be true of evicted and "skip-out" families. These types of families proved hard to find and hard to interview when found.

On the other hand as the study progressed it appeared that valuable data were being obtained regarding the opinion of former tenants and their attitude





towards public housing.. Thus a greater emphasis was placed on evaluating the social implications of families who left public housing.

Behind the specific purpose of evaluating the different stated aspects of public housing was a desire to understand the kind of communities present public housing policy is producing. For example the mobility of people living in public housing is of prime importance to the administration as well as to the people themselves. So is their attitude towards public housing and its effect upon this mobility. Also if the Authority can become aware of the attitudes of applicant families towards public housing communities the value of these communities can be better assessed.

Research in this particular field in Canada is limited. To the knowledge of this Housing Authority Dr. Albert Rose's study into some of the possible rehabilitative effects of public housing in his book "REGENT PARK" has been the only one published.<sup>(1)</sup> Occasionally articles have been printed in various journals but these have been based mostly upon subjective opinion and not upon "objective research". Dr. Rose and the students of the School of Social Work at the University of Toronto did some further research into Regent Park South in 1959 but in recent years very little has been added to the picture.

Another factor which has limited research and study in this field has been the apparent lack of real interest in the production of public housing in this country. Since 1949 the total production of subsidized low rental housing has numbered approximately 6,000 units in all of Canada or annually a production of somewhat better than 600 units. As the production of all housing units since 1946 has exceeded 1- $\frac{3}{4}$  million less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of one percent of this production has been subsidized low rental units.

(1) Albert Rose: Regent Park: A study in Slum Clearance: Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958.





Until the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority programme became large enough to feel it could carry a full time Research Officer no local Authority in Canada felt its programme was large enough to warrant the production of research studies.

Another purpose of these studies was to prove or disprove the judgments about public housing communities which have arisen over the years of operation. For example, the Authority feels that large concentrations of public housing only serve to create an image and feeling of segregation among its tenants and the general citizenry. This is a subjective judgment based upon experience. It is also one reason why the Authority wishes to look on its experience objectively to verify or disprove its contention.

To date Canadian practice in the administration and operation of public housing has been based upon experience elsewhere. We have looked to other countries and adopted what appeared to work and attempted to avoid their mistakes. Inevitably we have come to realize that the Canadian experience is different enough to warrant our making decisions based upon what holds true here.

This is not to argue that the experience in other countries is not relevant. Obviously much can be learned from this experience. But as yet we have very little objective data on Canadian experience to compare with foreign experience in order to measure even the degree of difference that does exist.

Thus another purpose of public housing research in Canada emerges. We should develop our own body of knowledge in order to be able to compare it with experience elsewhere so that we can measure the degree of similarity and difference. We might then be better able to assess foreign experience and apply it to our own.



In a small way the research which went into their study marks a starting point. This research marks the beginning of the building up of a body of knowledge based upon Canadian Housing Authority experience so that we can continuously evaluate that experience. By developing this knowledge we may be better equipped to build better communities with public housing. We also hope that we may learn and develop better techniques of producing, designing, administering and maintaining the public housing of the future.

Finally just to know and do are not ends in themselves. The final evaluation must be whether public housing is answering a need of many Canadians. If we can learn whether or not it does and how better may answer the need then this small beginning will answer its greatest purpose.

#### Method

Early in its history as an organization the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority set up a statistical card system in order to have a record of each family housed in the public housing dwellings under its administration. As a result information as to family composition and size, family income, source of income, municipality of employment and residence, rent paid in the public housing is kept. The system used is a card punch system which is kept up to date on a monthly basis. The Authority's lease with its tenants is on a monthly basis and changes in income and family size have to be reported to the Authority by the tenants. This gives an up to date picture of the families living in public housing. On the other hand as the punch cards have no built in "memory" the past history of the family cannot be kept. These cards, one for each family are retained after a family moves out. Thus the Authority has a record of the family as it was when it left the public housing units.





Having these cards available meant that this study has a record of the kind of families that live in the project as well as those that left. As well cards are kept of families applying to the Housing Authority for accommodation but only as long as they are active and interested. Once a family refuses accommodation the statistical card is destroyed. Fortunately their file is kept along with their last known address.

Because this study interested itself in the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of families living in public housing it was decided to concentrate upon those families who moved out. It was felt that they might more readily reveal those satisfactions and dissatisfactions once they were no longer tenants of the Authority.

Early in the study experience, it became obvious that an interview process was necessary. This was the only way possible to get at what tenants and ex-tenants liked or disliked about public housing. The statistical cards only give the bare skeleton of the facts of family life. As we were interested in what they felt it was necessary to interview these families. Also as the interest of the research began to focus more on the ex-tenants of the Authority, it became obvious that a personal interview was necessary, not only to get their views, but to objectively assess their accommodation.

The first approach to the development of an interview schedule ended in the production of a highly structured schedule. The respondents were to answer a number of questions directly, by which means it was felt that their satisfactions and/or dissatisfactions would appear. However, it became obvious that this method would not be able to get at the intensity of feeling which interested the research group. As well, answers would be forced in areas where the respondent had no real interest.





Finally a partly structured but largely unstructured interview schedule was devised. However, before this occurred a completely unstructured interview form was tried. It was found that certain key questions had to be asked to elicit responses in the area of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and these were inserted in the interview. Direct questions were asked re: transportation, shopping, recreation facilities for children, rules and regulations and rent.

Attitudes about friends in the public housing projects, neighbors and children seem to be expressed when the respondent was asked what he liked or disliked about the public housing project. Other attitudes towards management and the neighborhood came out when questions were asked about whether living in public housing helped them, or whether they would recommend public housing to families in similar circumstances to theirs. Strict structuring did not seem at all necessary.

The interview schedule for families who refused housing began as a largely unstructured schedule and remained that way as interviewing experience seemed to elicit responses that could be tabulated and measured.

With the emphasis placed upon the interview method the choice of interviewers became important. It was hoped to obtain persons with extensive interviewing skills particularly from the field of sociology and social work. It became obvious that skilled and practiced interviewers were not available as they were employed elsewhere. University students in the fields of social work and sociology were the next obvious source of interviewers. Two undergraduates from the Department of Sociology of the University of Toronto were hired.

At first, discussion of the schedule and then of the actual interviews took place between the Research Officer and the interviewers. It was during this



time that the schedules were modified to elicit more direct responses. The two students developed interviewing skills rapidly and soon could be left more on their own and weekly reviews of the interviews became the rule.

As the interviewing tool became more refined the question of the sample occupied the research teams mind. Although forwarding addresses for many of the move-out tenants were available, this was not true in all cases. In order to develop a wider universe - move-outs in the years 1960 and 1961 were used. This meant that particularly in the 1960 move-outs, even the forwarding addresses were out of date. What finally happened was that all move-outs that could be found were interviewed and these were then compared to the total universe of move-outs to see if they agreed in the areas of family size and composition, income and municipality of origin before moving into the public housing projects. These criteria were used to test the validity of the sample.

The years 1960-1961 were also used in setting up the total universe for families who had refused public housing. Here the last known address was used to find the families. Once more all families that could be found were interviewed and the validity of the sample tested accordingly to family size and composition and family income although this latter was difficult to obtain.

During the years 1960-1961 the Authority had under its administration two housing projects South Regent Park and Lawrence Heights. South Regent Park is located on a downtown redevelopment site. It consists of 732 housing units of which 479 are in 5 fourteen storey elevator buildings and the remaining 253 units are row houses. Some of the tenants of this project lived in the area prior to redevelopment. The minimum shelter rent charged at the time of the study was \$30 per month. The maximum income at that time was \$4500 per annum.





Lawrence Heights, on the other hand consisted of 1043 housing units. Five hundred and seventy nine of these units were located in walk up apartments, while the remaining 464 units were in row, and semi-detached houses. The project is located in a suburban area and it was erected on vacant land. As well the minimum shelter rent was set at \$48 per month and the maximum income at \$5400. Unlike South Regent Park which is surrounded by old houses, many in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation, Lawrence Heights is surrounded by subdivisions built since 1945 containing families with middle class incomes.

Because of this disparity in situation, design, and environment, it was decided to look at the tenants and ex-tenants separately with an eye to the comparison of data between the housing projects. On the other hand because applications are made only to the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority itself, and the location desires of the applicant families are not always indicated, the applicants were treated as one group.

After the interviews were completed the basic information for each family interviewed was recorded. The size of the family was indicated as was the type of present accommodation. The neighborhood and present housing were graded as to the condition of the structures. Also recorded was the length of time the family stayed in the housing projects.

As the families' housing situation had been estimated before moving in to the public housing their present housing was compared with their former housing before moving into the project. Whether or not they moved back to the geographic area they resided in before public housing was noted. By this method some measurement of the improvement or lack of improvement in the housing occupied by the family after its public housing experience could be made.





The family attitude towards, community facilities such as, transportation, shopping in the housing project was rated. As well an attempt was made to grade the family feelings from most positive to most negative in a variety of areas.

The areas were:-

1. Facilities for children
2. Rent scheme
3. Attitudes towards children and teenagers.
4. Social environment with emphasis on bringing up children
5. Possibility of advancement
6. Friends in the project
7. Rules and regulations
8. Attitude towards control by Authority
9. Consciousness of class difference
10. Opinions re public housing accommodation
11. Attitude towards houses versus apartments
12. Attitudes towards public housing
13. Opinions about project other than the one family lived in

The scale used was developed by trial and error and an effort was made to arrive at a scale into which most answers could be fitted easily.

There was no effort made to bend the answer to fit the scale and the Research Officer and the two interviewers had to agree before any grading was carried out.

The tabulation of the data on families who refused public housing was based upon the direct statements of the respondents and no intensity scale was established. However, all the reasons given were tabulated but with no effort to measure which reason was of prime importance in each individual case.



### CHAPTER III: RELIABILITY OF DATA

Because the sampling process was based strictly upon the families that could be found the reliability of the data obtained is open to question. In order to test the sample of move-out families it was compared to the total universe in three areas which were felt to be vital to the basic issues of a family reaction to public housing.

In the first place, the sample was compared to the total move out population's family income. The Authority records were kept in the following income categories on a monthly basis. Up to \$199, \$200 - \$249, \$250 - \$299, \$300 - \$349, \$350 up. These categories were used in comparing family income. It was found that the sample average income was \$301 while that of the total universe was \$299. The median fell into the lower end of the \$300 - \$349 for the sample and while the upper end of \$250 - \$299 for the total universe. Because of the rather gross breakdown used it is felt that the median difference is not too significant. The close relationship between the mean income of the sample families and the mean income of all move-out families would indicate that in the area of income the sample families are representative of those families that move out of the public housing projects.

With respect to size of family, the average size of the move-out family was 4.5 persons. The average size of the sample families was 4.67. It is evident that all families we were able to interview were somewhat larger in size than the total universe. While the difference might have some significance the difference does not seem large enough to challenge the validity of the sample.

As far as municipality of origin was concerned the sample families represented the thirteen Metropolitan Toronto Municipalities as did the total universe.





There would appear to be no more reason for the sample families to move out and return to former neighborhoods. Whatever "homing" instinct might return a family to its former base of operation should apply as much to the sample families as to the total universe of move-outs.

One other point should be made and that is that the sample families represent only those families who voluntarily moved out following the giving of proper notice. It was impossible to trace the "skip-out" families. To find the families who were evicted was also difficult. When they were found, interviewing was virtually impossible.

Bearing this in mind it would appear that the sample families fairly represents the opinion of those families who voluntarily left the housing projects provided of course the number interviewed was large enough. The sample families are somewhat larger on the average than the total families and some weight must be given this factor. Also it is evident that the sample families are somewhat less mobile than all the move-out families as they were found by our interviewers. It is possible that they contain a larger percentage of home owners than occurs in the total universe. This lesser mobility must be taken into account when analyzing the data.

The number of interviews carried out with those tenants who voluntarily moved out represented 42.8% of the total number in the Lawrence Heights project and 39.7% of the South Regent Park universe or 40.5% of the number of families who moved out of the two projects in the years 1960-1961.

There is little doubt that the size of the sample makes the results representative of the opinions of all the families who voluntarily moved out. It is possible that the ex-tenants who became home owners when they left the project



are somewhat overrepresented in the sample. This might mean that a greater dissatisfaction with project life was found than was general in the total universe if the assumption that these families were more "upward striving" is correct.

It should be stated that the satisfactions and dissatisfactions found among the families who voluntarily left, might not be indicative of the attitudes of those who stayed in public housing. However, while those who remain might do so because they lacked the financial means to move out, it might also mean that they were more satisfied with their surroundings than those who left.

Having regard to the data collected for families who refused housing the size of the sample, 47.1%, would seem to indicate the validity of the results. Again it should be pointed out that the less mobile families were found and this must be taken into account. However, in general the reasons that these families gave for refusing an offer of public housing should be valid and applicable to Authority experience in the future.





CHAPTER IV: MOVE OUT RATES IN PUBLIC HOUSING

When discussing mobility rates in the two housing projects under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority, we are handicapped by a lack of relevant data not only for this area but for all of Canada. Some pertinent data may be found from experience in the United States and it appears that experience in Canada is generally comparable to that in the United States particularly in large urban areas. In a general way the following seems applicable:-

"How much mobility is there? About one person in every five shifts residence over a year's time. About three quarters of our urban citizens were living in places in which they did not reside in 1940. America's city dwellers change their housing it seems, almost as often as they change their cars." (1)

It would appear if Canadian experience followed American, and it seems to do so, that about 20% of the population move every year. The fact that just 75% of families had changed residence in ten years indicates that some families must move many times to make up for those who do not move at all.

The same study indicates that mobility can be increased under certain circumstances.

".... The findings of this study indicate the major function of mobility to be the process by which families adjust their housing to the housing needs that are generated by the shifts in family composition that accompany life cycle changes.

(1) Peter H. Rossi: Why Families Move; A study in the Social Psychology of Urban Residential Mobility; Glencoe, The Free Press.1955. PL.



Mobility is the greatest in the period when families are experiencing greatest growth. Most of the moves made by a family take place within a decade after its formation. Young families, especially those who have just added to their members, are those who are most likely to move. When such families find their housing inadequate to the demands generated by these shifts in composition, they are especially likely to move." (1)

One other factor about mobility should be mentioned before an estimate is made of the mobility of the residents in the Housing Authority's two projects.

"Without exception previous residential mobility studies have shown that renters are considerably more mobile than owners. So firmly established was this relationship that tenure was used as a major criterion in the selection of study areas, and the findings ... indicate the reliability of this criterion.

.... The relationship between tenure and mobility potential ... is very high. Few owners are mobile and few tenants are stable." (2)

This study goes on to state:-

"In short, renters often express a moving inclination when they are satisfied and overwhelmingly so when they are dissatisfied. Owners rarely express a desire to move when satisfied and also when dissatisfied seem reluctant to crystallize the dissatisfaction into a desire to move" (3)

It would appear that Americans have a very high mobility rate with the most mobile families being the younger ones with a growing number of children.

(1) ibid P. 9

(2) ibid P.68-69

(3) ibid P. 89





Also, families who are renting accommodation appear to show a greater tendency to move than owner families. This description of young families with a growing number of children who are renting, fits the picture of families living in public housing.

One should expect a higher mobility rate in public housing projects if they are affected by the general pattern of mobility. The Public Housing Administration in the United States in its study on mobility patterns in public housing in that country, has this to say.

"Public housing move-outs are events by no means isolated from the wider content of urban, metropolitan or regional patterns of living. Public housing tenants are subject to the same general conditions as affect all the people of a locality. Consequently, move-out rates for public housing in the cities vary in much the same manner as mobility patterns characteristic of the whole population in each of the several cities and regions." (1)

Mobility is also affected by the economic climate of the area and country and the amount of housing available on the private market.

"Economic change has a direct effect upon the move-out rate in public housing. At the end of World War II the public housing rate nationally was 13% a year. This low level resulted primarily from the housing shortage which was particularly acute for low income families."

"As more housing became available and incomes increased the public housing move-out rate also increased. By 1949 it stood at 23%; it reached a high of 28% in 1954, but has since declined slightly," (2)

(1) Public Housing Administration: Mobility & Motivations ... survey of families moving from low rent housing, Washington 1958. P.2.

(2) ibid P. 4.



If this experience can be transferred to Metropolitan Toronto in 1960 - 1961, it would appear that the rate of move-outs should be quite high. The Metropolitan Toronto area is and was one of high mobility as the build-up in population in the suburbs indicates. It is also an area where a surplus number of housing units appear to have been built over the past few years as the growing vacancy rate in privately built apartments and the slowness in the resale of houses would indicate. These facts would seem to add to the potential mobility of a population composed mainly of young families with a growing number of children and who are renting.

What in fact has been the picture? In 1960 and 1961 we might have expected about 416 move-outs from the Lawrence Heights project and 292 from the South Regent Park project if the estimate that 20% of all the families would move out was valid. Indeed with the special properties of public housing families a higher percentage of move-outs might be expected.

In fact in 1960 - 173 families moved out of Lawrence Heights and 119 out of South Regent Park. Expressed in a percentage per annum these figures represent a substantially lesser percentage than might have been expected. It should also be pointed out that a number of these families were forced to move for a variety of reasons such as arrears of rent, for social misbehaviour, (1) so that the percentage of families who moved voluntarily in the project would be somewhat less e.g. 12% in Lawrence Heights instead of 16.5% and 10.8% in South Regent Park instead of 16.2%.

As a separate section of this report will deal with those families who involuntarily left or were forced out of the housing projects, the rest of this chapter on mobility will deal with the families who moved voluntarily.

(1) Family who "skipped out" without notifying the Authority are included in this category as being forced to move because of arrears of rent.





In the South Regent Park project families who moved out voluntarily were somewhat smaller in number than the average family in the project being 5.1 persons as against 5.4 persons: on the other hand the average family income of the families who left was higher than the average of the families in the project being \$292 per month against a project average of \$267 per month. As well 21% of these families came originally from the suburbs instead of the 15% of all project families who came from the suburbs.

In the Lawrence Heights project the family size of those families who moved out was somewhat less than the average of that project (4.2 persons compared to 4.4). The average incomes were more comparable, being \$293 to \$295 per month. As far as Municipality of origin was concerned it was almost exactly representative. About 50% of the move-out families came from the City of Toronto which was the same percentage that held for the total project.

It would appear that voluntary move-outs from the projects were typical when compared to the mobile families in the other sectors of the housing market. They were large although not as large as the average family. Generally speaking, they had larger incomes than many of the families in the projects. However, the mobility rate is still low when compared to the rest of the country.

There are probably three answers at least to this low rate of movement. Mr. Rossi in his study makes the following point:-

"The substantive findings stress space requirements as the most important of the needs generated by life cycle changes". (1)

(1) Rossi: op cit P. 178



In other words as the family increases it requires more space as it decreases it requires less space. Certainly the need for more room causes a great deal of the moving in the general population.

In public housing particularly in Metropolitan Toronto an effort has always been made by management to fit the unit to the family. In other words as the family grows in number generally so does the size of the housing unit.

As the family decreases in number so does the housing unit. As well, as children grow older and require separate bedrooms because of the distribution of the children by sex the management endeavours to find a proper size unit for the family. The low rate of mobility in the project is in part a reflection of the management ability to carry this process through.

It must be stated here that in discussing move-out rate and mobility, data are only available on families who moved out of the project. If internal moves were taken into account where families have been moved into housing units of a proper size the mobility rate would probably increase to at least the average rate for the Metropolitan Toronto area. However, move-outs from the public housing neighborhood have been small particularly when compared to experience in the United States.

Again in his study on mobility Mr. Rossi states:-

"Households which turned out to be unexpected stayers were on the whole held back from the fulfillment of their intentions by their inability to find new housing ... The scarcity of opportunities for large families of moderate income prevented such families from realizing their plans." (1)



In other words as long as there is a scarcity of housing for large families at a price they can afford even those families that want to move out of public housing and purchase or rent in the private market will be unable to do so.

It would appear that the mobility of the families in public housing in this country has been kept at a lower than average rate primarily because there is no reasonable alternative available for them in the private market. The rate has also been kept low because nowhere else can the large families find housing that will fit their needs more adequately.

Finally it must be pointed out that the years 1960 and 1961 represent the first two years of complete occupancy of the projects. Although some families had lived there three to four or more years, most of the families in the projects could not have been there more than two years. It is probable that the move-out rates will increase in time but it is likely that they will remain at a lower rate than the average because of the lack of reasonable alternatives for low income families and the management endeavour to fit the unit to the family size.





## CHAPTER V: PUBLIC HOUSING SITUATION & PRESENT HOUSING

This chapter will deal with tenant families that voluntarily moved out of the housing projects as well as the type of housing and neighborhood moved into by ex-tenants. A comparison will be made with all public housing experience, and experience after leaving public housing. Finally a comparison will be made in all these aspects between the Lawrence Heights housing project and the South Regent Park project.

Before entering into this analysis it must be pointed out once more that the sample families interviewed by the research staff probably present a slightly atypical picture. It is true the total sample represents 40.5% of all voluntary move-out families in the years 1960-1961, being made up of 9.7% of the South Regent Park families and 42.8% of the Lawrence Heights families. Also it is true that sampling techniques indicate that this size of sample chosen on a random basis can be considered representative of the total universe. However, it must be pointed out that the interviewing method probably found the least mobile families of those that left the project and this must be kept in mind throughout the remaining chapters of this study.

### APARTMENT AND HOUSE MOVE-OUTS AND FAMILY SIZE

TABLE 1:- PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES MOVING OUT FROM APARTMENTS AND HOUSES, BY PROJECT.

Type of Unit (1)	South Regent Park		Lawrence Heights	
	% of all Units	% Move-Outs	% of all Units	% Move-Outs
Apartment	65.4	70.1	55.5	71.3
Row, Semi-Detached Houses	34.6	29.9	44.5	28.7

- (1) In 1960-61, South Regent Park had 479 apartment units in 5-14 storey elevator buildings and 253 row houses. Lawrence Heights had 579 apartment units in walk-up buildings and 420 row houses and 44 semi-detached houses.



In both cases the percentage of move-out families from apartment buildings was significantly greater than the percentage of that type of unit in the Project, being 4.7% more in South Regent Park and 15.8% more in Lawrence Heights. These data would seem to indicate, perhaps not surprisingly, that the apartment dwellers tended to be more likely to move than house occupiers.

The fact that the larger families on low income are less likely to be able to find accommodation suitable to their needs outside the project than the smaller families who occupy the apartments, explains the surprising larger percentage of apartment move-outs in Lawrence Heights compared to South Regent Park. The Authority's experience would indicate that high rise elevator apartment buildings are somewhat less satisfactory to live in than the walk-up apartments in Lawrence Heights, yet to a degree these data would negate this feeling. However, the apartments in South Regent Park are larger in size than in Lawrence Heights. The average bedroom count in Regent Park is 2.29, in Lawrence Heights, 1.81. It is likely that the larger families in South Regent Park could not find satisfactory alternative accommodation elsewhere than the smaller families in Lawrence Heights and, therefore, they tend to stay.

This is apparent from the greater voluntary move-out rate in Lawrence Heights. Ability to find other accommodation at a reasonable rate affects the decision to move.

The fact that family size has a bearing on ability to move is borne out by the fact that the average size of families in the sample was 5.1 in South Regent Park and 4.4 in Lawrence Heights. This is less than the average size family in South Regent Park which was 5.5 and the same as the average size family in Lawrence Heights. This lower average in Lawrence Heights partly





accounts for the greater move-out rate in the project compared to Regent Park. The lower average family size in the South Regent Park sample to reinforce the hypotheses that larger families found it more difficult to find suitable accommodation outside public housing.

Another factor which contributed to the move-out of the sample families was the size of their income. In South Regent Park this was \$293.00 per month and in Lawrence Heights about \$305.00 per month. Both these figures are substantially above the average for the projects concerned. Undoubtedly as income increases, families are more capable of finding housing elsewhere.

Further, with respect to family size in both Projects, the sample families who voluntarily moved out show an increase in average family size during their stay in public housing. In South Regent Park they increased from 4.96 persons to 5.18 persons and in Lawrence Heights from 4.2 persons to 4.4 persons. These data would indicate several things: 1. they reinforce the experience of the Housing Authority that there is a natural growth in population after families occupy public housing, and 2. generally speaking the families who move into public housing are still young enough to continue to produce children. The problem of an aging population and a decreasing family size is not as yet evident in the two projects under consideration.

The difference in the figures for South Regent Park and Lawrence Heights seems to reinforce the concept that the mobility scale is in reverse proportion to the amount of subsidy. South Regent Park is a fully subsidized project while Lawrence Heights is a partly subsidized partly full recovery project. As long as this difference pertains, coupled with the smaller family size a greater move-out rate should be expected from Lawrence Heights.



As mentioned earlier, it is probable that the sample families represent the less mobile of those families who moved out of the housing projects. This seems to be borne out by the figures for mobility before entering public housing. The respondents were asked if they had moved a great deal before entering public housing and the following table seems to be indicative of the mobility of the group.

TABLE 2:- MOBILITY OF SAMPLE MOVE-OUT FAMILIES PRIOR TO ENTERING PUBLIC HOUSING BY PROJECT.

Moved a great deal	South Regent Park	Lawrence Heights
YES	22.4%	23.1%
NO	77.5%	76.9%

It would appear from Table 2 that there was no significant difference in the mobility patterns for the housing project in which they were housed. In both cases better than three families out of every four felt that they had not moved very much before entry into public housing. It would appear that the mobility rate of this sample of low income families was less than would be expected. These data would reinforce the concept that the sample families are less mobile than the total universe of all families who moved out. The families who were not interviewed had either moved so often (or left the area) that they could not be found. As only 3% of the total move-outs stated they were leaving the Metropolitan area at the time of move-out it is apparent that by far the larger percentage of those who could not be found had moved two or more times since leaving the housing projects.

Another sign of the mobility or lack of mobility of the sample families



might be indicated by the length of time they stayed in the housing projects. Although both projects were completed and fully occupied by 1960 the first families had moved in as early as 1957 in both cases. Table 3 shows the length of stay in public housing of the sample of move-out families.

TABLE 3:- LENGTH OF STAY OF SAMPLE MOVE-OUT FAMILIES BY PROJECT.

	South Regent Park	Lawrence Heights
Average No. of Years	2.4	2
Median	2	2

It would appear that the families who voluntarily moved out of the public housing used the projects as a temporary stopping off point until they could find accommodation elsewhere, or at least until they had enough resources to move into the private housing sector. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that only 10 families or 6.0% of the total sample in both projects, moved less than a year after occupying public housing, while 16 or 9.6% of these families stayed for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years or more. The research team expected a greater number of families would stay for less than a year because of the supposed mobility of lower income families.

The difference in average length of stay between the two projects becomes more significant as only 1 family or 1.7% of the South Regent Park sample moved out in under a year compared to 9 families or 8.3% of the Lawrence Heights sample. At the other end of the scale 9 families or 15.5% of the sample stayed for more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years in South Regent Park as compared to 7 families or 6.4% of the sample in Lawrence Heights. This would appear to reinforce the view that





the mobility rate in Lawrence Heights is greater than South Regent Park.

One word of caution might be mentioned here. South Regent Park was fully occupied about one year earlier than Lawrence Heights thus the families had a chance to live there longer. It is possible that the length of stay of move-out families will increase as the projects get older. On the other hand, the mobility rate of Lawrence Heights is reflected in the number of families who moved out in less than a year. It is apparently too soon to make any final estimate as to whether future move-out rates in the projects will increase or decrease. In fact, this may be a futile exercise as the economic situation and the cost of housing will obviously affect these rates.

The income figures and family size figures indicate that the voluntary move-out families are generally smaller than the average public housing family and also have more income than the average family. The figures also indicate that they represent a large proportion of "whole" families. In South Regent Park 82.7% of move-out families are husband-led while in Lawrence Heights 92.6% have a male head. It would appear that the "whole" family tends to move rather than the "broken" family.

The Authority by its policy of limiting public assistance cases to 20% of total families in South Regent Park and 15% in Lawrence Heights has helped to account for the difference in the percentage of "whole" families in Lawrence Heights.

#### WHAT HAPPENS TO MOVE-OUT FAMILIES?

One of the first questions asked the respondents in this study was whether they owned their present accommodation or rented. The following table shows the percentage of owners and renters by the project they occupied.



TABLE 4:- VOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS STATUS OF PRESENT TENURE BY PROJECT

PROJECT	RENT		OWN	
	#	%	#	%
SOUTH REGENT PARK	39	67.2	19	32.8
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	66	61.1	42	38.9
	105	63.3	61	36.7

As can be seen, 61 families or 36.7% of the sample families were buying their housing units. However, it must be reiterated here that the automatic assumption that 36.7% of all families who voluntarily leave public housing purchase their home is not completely correct. The sampling technique used would turn up more home owners than pertains throughout the universe as these families tend to be somewhat more stable.

What is also interesting is that a larger percentage of ex-tenants of Lawrence Heights purchased homes than South Regent Park. This is probably to be expected because of the larger incomes and smaller families which exist in the former project.

The next subject to be looked at was the type of accommodation occupied.

TABLE 5:- TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION OCCUPIED AFTER LEAVING PUBLIC HOUSING -- By Project.

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION	SOUTH REGENT PARK		LAWRENCE HEIGHTS		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Room	5	8.7	2	1.8	7	4.3
Flat	4	6.6	4	3.8	8	4.8
Apartment	15	25.9	36	33.3	51	30.7
House	34	58.6	66	61.1	100	60.2





It would appear that by far the largest number of families (one hundred or 60.2% of the sample) moved into houses after they left the housing projects. Fifty-one families or 30.7% of the sample moved into apartments and only 9.1% or 15 families moved into flats or rooms.

In comparing the two projects it would appear that South Regent Park tenants are somewhat more likely to move into rooms or flats, as 15.3% of the move-out families did so compared to the Lawrence Heights 5.6%. On the other hand, they appear almost as likely to move into houses.

A comparison of Table 4 and Table 5 indicates that a fairly large number of move-out families are finding houses for rent on the private market. Thirty-nine families or 23.5% of the total move-out families were renting houses. Of these 24 or 22.2% of the Lawrence Heights move-outs were renting houses while 15 or 26.2% of the South Regent Park move-outs were renting houses.

Although the type of accommodation occupied after public housing appears to indicate an improvement over the pre-public housing accommodation occupied by the move-out families the physical condition of the housing occupied might verify this assumption.

TABLE 6:- PHYSICAL CONDITION OF HOUSING UNITS OCCUPIED BY MOVE-OUT FAMILIES --  
By Project.

CONDITION	SOUTH REGENT PARK		LAWRENCE HEIGHTS		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Poor	10	17.2	2	1.8	12	7.2
Fair	13	22.4	17	15.8	30	18.1
Good	22	37.9	44	40.7	66	39.8
Excellent	12	20.7	45	41.7	57	34.3
Unknown (1)	1	1.8	--	--	1	.6

(1) Represents a case where interview was carried out away from the dwelling unit.



Again the majority of families from both projects moved into good or excellent accommodation. Of the total sample three out of every four families were housed satisfactorily. However, while 58.6% of the Regent Park move-outs were housed in good to excellent accommodation, 82.4% of the move-outs from Lawrence Heights were housed in accommodation of good or excellent condition. It would appear that the families who left Lawrence Heights were better able to find suitable accommodation.

From the previous discussion, it would appear correct to assume that the Lawrence Heights families were more likely to have improved their accommodation after leaving public housing when compared to what they lived in before. In order to look at this assumption more closely a movement scale was adopted. The housing of families was rated prior to their moving into public housing. If this rating could be compared with the rating given the accommodation moved into later some measure of improvement or lack of improvement could be arrived at. As the Research Officer had helped to develop the rating scale used in assessing post move-out accommodation the two scales had a similar base. For ease of placement on the movement scale the grades excellent, good, fair and poor were used.

TABLE 7:- MOVEMENT OF VOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS BY COMPARISON TO PRE-PUBLIC HOUSING ACCOMMODATION BY PROJECT.

Project	Poor to Excellent	Poor to good Fair to Excellent	Poor to fair Fair to good Good to Excellent	Same	Excellent to good Good to Fair Fair to Poor	Not Known
SOUTH REGENCY PARK	# 5 % 8.7	14 24.2	25 43.2	3 6.6	1 1.8	9 15.5
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# 13 % 112.0	42 38.9	30 27.8	18 16.7		5 4.6



It would appear that the vast majority of ex-tenants improved their housing by at least one step up the condition ladder. Somewhat better than three out of every four families improved their pre-public housing condition after moving out of public housing. The figure is slightly smaller for South Regent Park than Lawrence Heights but not significantly so. These data indicate that in reality the ex-tenants of Lawrence Heights were somewhat better housed before entry into public housing than families who lived in the South Regent Park project. It is also significant that only one family out of the 152 for which data were available went into worse housing in our judgment.

Certainly this improvement in housing is due to a great extent to an easing of the housing shortage. The private market seems better able to house these families. On the other hand, the time spent in public housing gave these families a chance to build up their morale and living standards to the point that they were able to take advantage of this situation.

The study next attempted to look at the neighborhood in which the housing was located. The first proposition examined was whether or not move-out families tended to return to the areas they came from. A map of Metropolitan Toronto was divided up into a number of areas. These were the same as used by the Authority in locating the areas from which applicant families come. If the family returned to the same area number than the area was considered to be the same. If they returned to the area surrounding this "home" area they were considered as having returned to a neighboring area. If they returned to the same municipality but not the same area or a neighboring area this was another grouping. If they moved generally in the same direction, but in a different municipality this established another group. The fifth group used was when they moved to a different municipality and a different direction. These sectors





attempted to measure the attraction of the "home" neighborhood. As a map of Metropolitan Toronto of a scale of 1 inch = .6 miles was divided into 160 areas the measurement seems fairly fine. If a family moved into a neighboring area which happened to be in a different municipality this was still assumed to be a neighboring area.

TABLE 8:- RATING OF MOVE-OUT FAMILIES BY RETURN TO PRE-PUBLIC HOUSING AREA BY PROJECT

Project	Same Area	Neighboring Area	Different Area Same Municipality	Different Municipality Same Direction	Different Municipality Different Direction	Unknown
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# 13 % 22.4	13 22.4	5 8.6	7 12.1	16 27.6	4 6.9
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# 23 % 21.3	17 15.7	8 7.5	14 12.9	45 41.7	1 .9
TOTAL	# 36 % 21.6	30 18.1	13 7.8	21 12.7	61 36.7	5 3.1

It is interesting to note that 39.7% of the move-out families moved back to the same or neighboring areas while 36.7% of the total moved to completely different areas in different municipalities. It is also interesting to note that about the same ratio from both projects move back to the areas in which they formerly lived. i.e. slightly better than 1 in 5 families. This percentage seems somewhat lower than might be expected but is probably explained by the fact that most of the move-out families bettered their housing. It is possible that better housing was not available in some of the areas from which these families came.

Conversely better than 1 out of every 3 families moved to a different



area in a different municipality. Of significance is the difference between the projects. In Lawrence Heights 41.7% moved to different areas while 27.6% of the South Regent Park families did so. It would appear that a number of the families who moved to Lawrence Heights from the city (about 50% of all Lawrence Heights families come from the city) tended to find housing in the suburbs.

If movement to the suburbs is a sign of the "upward" striving of families and this has been accepted as true by some experts (1) then the families who move out of Lawrence Heights seem more upward striving than those from South Regent Park. This data reinforces a conclusion which seemed apparent when other factors were looked at.

These data also would indicate that families from the city who were housed in a city located project tend to remain in the more downtown location. Families who accept public housing in the suburbs are more likely to remain in the suburbs when they move out.

The interview data were looked at to estimate whether the new district was physically better than the one occupied by these families before public housing. A scale of movement was worked out as far as condition of housing was concerned. The new suburban neighborhood was considered excellent while the old, dilapidated downtown location was more likely to be considered poor.

(1) Rossi. opcit



TABLE 9:- MOVEMENT OF VOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS BY COMPARISON TO PRE-PUBLIC HOUSING NEIGHBORHOOD BY PROJECT.

Project		Poor To Excellent	Poor to Good Fair To Excellent	Poor To Fair Fair To Good Good To Excellent	Same	Excellent To Good Good To Fair Fair To Poor	Unknown
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	5 8.7	5 8.7	17 29.4	17 29.4	4 6.6	10 17.2
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	6 5.6	12 11.1	27 25.0	45 41.7	5 4.6	13 12.0
TOTAL	# %	11 6.7	17 10.2	44 26.5	62 37.3	9 5.5	23 13.8 (1)

(1) In these cases former neighborhood was not known.

Assuming that the non-ratable situations were spread out on the rating scale in the same percentages as the rest of the families the following table applies.

TABLE 10:- MOVEMENT WHERE MEASURABLE OF VOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS BY COMPARISON TO PRE-PUBLIC HOUSING NEIGHBORHOOD BY PROJECTS

Project		Poor To Excellent	Poor To Good Fair To Excellent	Poor To Fair Fair To Good Good To Excellent	Same	Excellent To Good Good To Fair Fair To Poor
SOUTH REGENT PARK	%	10.4	10.4	35.4	35.4	8.4
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	%	6.3	12.6	28.4	47.4	5.3
TOTAL	%	7.7	11.9	30.7	43.4	6.3





These data seem to indicate that slightly more than one-half of the families moved to neighborhoods which were better physically than those they inhabited before moving into public housing. It is interesting to note that 55.4% of the South Regent Park families moved to better neighborhoods while 47.3% of the Lawrence Heights families improved their neighborhood.

On the other hand 47.4% of the Lawrence Heights families kept their neighborhood standards on the same level compared to 35.4% of the families who did this from South Regent Park. It would appear that the families from South Regent Park were more likely to improve their neighborhood probably because they originally came from somewhat poorer areas than the families in Lawrence Heights.

However, it should be pointed out that more families who left the downtown project were likely to return to poorer neighborhoods. This seems to verify the opinion that the families who left Lawrence Heights were somewhat more likely to be "upward striving" than those from South Regent Park.

Up to this point this chapter has concerned itself with where the ex-tenants went after their stay in Public Housing. All comparisons made have been with the accommodation they had before moving into public housing particularly with regard to the physical condition of the housing and neighborhood. The assumption was made that because the public housing which properly fitted their families that physically at least the post public housing accommodation could not be an improvement upon public housing accommodation.

There are several areas where it would be possible to make a comparison with public housing. In the first place, the percentage of family income spent



on shelter could be compared. Secondly, the kind of housing, house, apartment, etc. could be compared to the accommodation in public housing.

Ever since subsidized public housing was introduced in Canada the rent a family pays has been geared to the size of the family income as defined by the Federal-Provincial partnership. The scale used has been the "Carver-Hopwood" scale developed in 1946-1947. Accordingly, between 23-27% of a family's income has been spent on rent including services. As the income increases so does the rent and conversely as it decreases so does the rent until it hits a minimum rent which is different in both projects under study. Generally speaking it can be assumed that the 23-27% applies to all families in public housing on the average.

In establishing this comparison a percentage of family income as defined by the partnership was established in all respondent families where rent or post public housing accommodation and present income were known. Out of the sample of 166 families a percentage could be developed for 150 families. The assumption was made that the other sixteen families where either the income or the rent or both were not known, followed the same ratio established for the known families.

TABLE 11:- PERCENTAGE OF HOUSING COST TO FAMILY INCOME IN POST PUBLIC HOUSING ACCOMMODATION BY PROJECT

Project		0-9%	10-17%	18-22%	23-27%	28-32%	33-37%	38-42%	43 plus %
SOUTH REGENCY PARK	#	8	0	2	16	11	9	2	3
	%	15.9	0	3.9	31.4	21.5	17.6	3.9	5.8
LA. RENEE HEIGHTS	#	3	3	15	33	22	10	3	10
	%	3.0	3.0	15.1	33.3	22.2	10.2	2.9	10.2
TOTAL	#	11	3	17	49	33	19	5	13
	%	7.3	2.0	11.3	32.7	22.0	12.7	3.3	8.7



On the average the move-out families paid 27.2% of their income for housing cost, the median family lies very clearly in the 23-27% range. It might appear that these families were paying the same percent of income as they were in the projects. In fact except at the lower end of the income scale where the minimum rent might raise the percentage and for incomes over the maximum where a penalty rent is imposed, all families in public housing pay in the 23-27% range. The range does not go to zero or as high as 43%. Therefore, a comparison of average does not give a true picture.

From perusal of Table 11 it would appear that 1 out of every 5 families leaving pay less rent than they would in public housing; 1.6 families pay the same and 2.4 out of every 5 pay more. Although no comparison of public housing units to the ones occupied was made, it seems a safe assumption that these families could not be occupying better units than they found in public housing. Almost one-half of them were prepared to pay more for less satisfactory physical accommodation.

There is no significant difference in the pattern for the two projects except at the very lowest and very highest ends of the scale. It is interesting that 8 families in South Regent Park found accommodation where they paid 0-9% of their income. In most of these cases these families returned to a parent's home, usually a single parent, and paid no rent while food and other costs were shared. On the other hand, 10 of the Lawrence Heights move-outs were prepared to pay over 42% of their income for shelter. In most of these cases, the families were purchasing the home and seemed willing to make sacrifices to achieve the status of home ownership.

The climate of opinion in this country that families should live in houses with their own back and front yard on property they preferably should





own, obviously affects the families' reasons for moving out. For this reason a comparison was made of the type of accommodation move-out families occupied during and after their stay in public housing.

TABLE 12:- MOVE OUT FAMILIES BY TYPE OF UNIT OCCUPIED DURING AND AFTER PUBLIC HOUSING BY PROJECT.

Project		Apt/Apt	Apt/House	House/House	House/Apt	Other (1)
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	12	20	13	3	10
	%	20.7	34.5	22.4	5.2	17.2
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	31	41	25	5	6
	%	28.7	37.9	23.1	4.7	5.6
TOTAL	#	43	61	38	8	16
	%	25.9	36.8	22.9	4.9	9.5

(1) These families moved into rooms, flats or shared accommodation.

Of the large number of families who moved into houses over 60% lived in apartments while in public housing. On the other hand of other families moving into apartments only 16% moved from houses in public housing. Obviously the majority of move-out families prefer houses. These families seem to have accepted the concept that a house, practically any house is better for family living than an apartment.

On the other hand about 40% of the families moving out of apartments go to apartments in private housing. In the large number of cases these families are small in size and older in age than the average family. This accounts for the larger number of families moving out of Lawrence Heights who remain in apartments as compared to South Regent Park. By far the larger percentage of



apartments in Lawrence Heights are one and two bedrooms while the majority of apartments in South Regent Park are three bedrooms.

It would appear that the desire to live in a house with its own self contained services and amenities is one of the reasons why families particularly those with children move out of the apartments in public housing. This attitude to amenities and services might be more fully clarified in the next chapter which looks at social satisfactions and dissatisfactions. Certainly the larger ratio of move-outs from the apartments indicates this kind of dissatisfaction plays some part. As well the climate of opinion regarding houses and apartments which pertains in the larger community seems to pertain in Public Housing.



CHAPTER VI: SATISFACTIONS AND DISSATISFACTIONS

In the interviews carried out with the voluntary move-out families from both projects an effort was made to assess what role services or their lack played in the decision to move out. The attitudes of these families to various aspects of the social environment in public housing were also examined.

During the interviews the families were asked their opinion of the actual unit they occupied in public housing. Their reactions were graded in the following manner:-

- A        Housing unit excellent, best the family ever lived in
- B        Housing unit good, superior to most commercial accommodation
- C        Housing unit fair, certain inconveniences that could be improved upon
- D        Housing unit poor, accommodation completely inadequate for the family.

TABLE 13 . ATTITUDE TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACCOMMODATION BY PROJECT

PROJECT		A UNIT EXCELLENT	B UNIT GOOD	C UNIT FAIR	D UNIT POOR	NO COMMENT
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	37	16	5	-	-
	%	63.8	27.6	8.6	-	-
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	76	14	12	6	-
	%	70.4	12.9	11.1	5.6	-
TOTAL	#	113	30	17	6	-
	%	68.1	18.1	10.2	3.6	-





It is interesting to note that less than 14% of the families thought that public housing accommodation showed any physical inadequacies. In fact, only 3.6% really had any strong objections to the housing. In the main these objections centred around such things as laundry facilities and having to climb stairs in apartment buildings. In fact all but four of the twenty-three families who had complaints lived in apartment buildings. It would appear that in most cases where complaints occurred they settled around the ancillary services in apartment buildings e.g. laundries, elevators, etc.

What is also interesting to note is the difference in attitude of the former residents of the two projects. Relatively few families in South Regent Park complained about the physical attributes even though the highrise buildings must have contributed to the dissatisfactions. Families from Lawrence Heights were more critical probably indicating their greater striving to climb up the social and economic scale. It is also possible that families on the third floor of a non-elevator building feel more dissatisfaction with their physical environment because of the stairs that must be climbed daily.

When all this is said what is most striking is the large number of families who appeared to be completely satisfied with their housing unit. It would appear from this that other reasons caused these families to move. Reasons which had to be strong enough to overcome their pleasure with the housing unit.

In order to explore other possible areas which might have brought about the move-outs, attitudes towards several service facilities outside the physical housing, such as shopping and transportation, were studied. The reaction to these facilities by these families was measured, as they were asked to comment upon them and weigh the standards of these services. Table 14 deals with their reaction



to the ease by which they either transported themselves or were transported to work, shopping, recreation, etc. Thus it is a comment not only upon the public transportation facilities but upon the roads and the distance from place of employment, recreation, etc.

TABLE 14: ATTITUDE TOWARDS TRANSPORTATION BY PROJECT

PROJECT		EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO COMMENT
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	39	10	2	3	4
	%	67.2	17.2	3.5	5.2	6.9
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	31	22	20	33	2
	%	28.7	20.4	18.5	30.5	1.9
TOTAL	#	70	32	22	36	6
	%	42.2	19.3	13.2	21.7	3.6

That is most significant about these data is the difference between the two projects. As generally speaking those families with automobiles were fairly satisfied, the large percentage who considered Lawrence Heights transportation "poor", were commenting upon the public facility. During the years covered by this study the Project was not directly serviced by public transportation, and the dissatisfaction is clearly discernible. It is likely that this dissatisfaction helped these families in their decision to move out of public housing.

The fact that Lawrence Heights is in the second transportation zone, and therefore, an additional fare had to be expended to get into Zone 1 added to this dissatisfaction. The difference between the 49.1% dissatisfied in Lawrence Heights and the 8.7% dissatisfaction in South Regent Park clearly indicated the extent of the problem created when a public housing project is located in the suburbs where public transportation is difficult of access and where the fares might be greater certainly than in a downtown project such as South Regent Park.



It would appear safe to assume that while the attitude towards transportation facilities did not add very much to the desire to move in South Regent Park, it contributed noticeably to this desire to move in Lawrence Heights.

While it is most likely that transportation might present one of the most obvious areas of dissatisfaction in a suburban housing project of any type, another area of possible dissatisfaction was thought to be that of shopping. The following table represents the reactions of respondents to the shopping facilities near their project:-

TABLE 15: ATTITUDE TOWARDS SHOPPING FACILITIES BY PROJECT

PROJECT		EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO ANSWER
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	40	14	7	2	5
	%	51.7	24.1	12.1	3.5	8.6
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	33	27	24	23	1
	%	30.5	25.0	22.3	21.3	.9
TOTAL	#	63	41	31	25	6
	%	37.9	24.7	18.7	15.1	3.6

Again the significant figures in this table lie in the differences between the two projects. The suburban project shows more than 43% of the families with some complaint compared to 15.6% in the downtown project. The dissatisfaction here is not as great as that shown for transportation because of the good quality of the shopping facilities once arrived at. The difficulties seem to lie in the distance that the groceries had to be carried and to a very slight degree with the prices that had to be paid.

Some consideration must be made of the fact that a large number of public housing tenants are dependant upon public transportation. If possible, suburban





projects should be placed in areas where public transportation exists and shopping facilities are near at hand. It is likely that dissatisfaction with the shopping facilities had decreased since the installation of a neighborhood shopping centre in Lawrence Heights. If good shopping is not available the tenant desire to move out is reinforced.

Besides transportation and shopping, it was decided to test the ex-tenants' reaction to the facilities provided for the dweller in the projects. The lack of organized recreation facilities for children had helped to bring about the establishment of the Tenants' Associations in both projects. As most tenants came from areas where over-crowding occurred and recreation facilities were not immediately available, they seemed to feel a great need for such facilities once in public housing. This seems to be verified by the strong attempts made by the Lawrence Heights Tenants' Association to get a community centre for that project, attempts which were finally successful.

TABLE 16: ATTITUDE TO CHILDREN'S FACILITIES BY PROJECT

PROJECT		EXCELLENT	GOOD	NO COMMENT	SOME DEFICIENCIES	EXTREME DISSATIS.	NOT APPLICABLE (1)
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	18	9	9	20	1	1
	%	31.1	15.5	15.5	34.5	1.7	1.7
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	45	15	5	31	8	4
	%	41.7	13.9	4.6	28.7	7.4	3.7
TOTAL	#	63	24	14	51	9	5
	%	37.9	14.5	8.4	30.7	5.4	3.1

(1) Families with no children

Despite the evident dissatisfaction with the recreation facilities expressed by the tenants only slightly more than 5% of the move-out families were extremely dissatisfied with these facilities. It is interesting to note that at



both ends of the scale Lawrence Heights ex-tenants show either more satisfaction or dissatisfaction than the tenants who left South Regent Park. On the other hand a larger group from the latter project made no comment.

Most of the dissatisfaction in both projects seemed related to the lack of supervision in the playgrounds. This was the major deficiency which showed in the area under "Some Deficiencies". However, the preponderance of satisfied ex-tenants in this area would indicate that this was not an area which concerned much more than one-third of their number.

It should be noted that for the first time in the expression of attitudes around the physical facilities, that a smaller proportion of tenants from South Regent Park expressed satisfaction than from Lawrence Heights. This is possibly explained by the difference between the more densely populated downtown site and the more open, less densely populated suburban site. This should be kept in mind when developing new public housing sites. It would appear advisable to provide as much play space as possible, perhaps even overprovide it if the site is to be heavily populated, particularly with children.

Thus far, this chapter has concerned itself with the reaction of the ex-tenants to some of the physical facilities. The total group was most satisfied with the physical accommodation (86.7%), then with the shopping facilities (62.6%), followed by transportation (61.5%), and last with the facilities for children (52.4%).

When rating this degree of satisfaction there seems to be a significant difference between the downtown project and the suburban location. South Regent Park ex-tenants are still most satisfied with the physical accommodation (91.4%), followed next by transportation (84.4%), then shopping facilities (75.8%), and



lastly facilities for children (only 46.6%). The rating in descending order for Lawrence Heights is as follows: Physical Accommodation (93.3%), Facilities for Children (55.6%), Shopping Facilities (55.5%) and Transportation (49.1%).

It would appear from this that the densely populated downtown site provided excellent accommodation and transportation facilities and only somewhat less adequate shopping facilities, while the facilities for children were inadequate. The suburban site provided excellent accommodation, just adequate play facilities and shopping facilities and less than adequate transportation facilities.

It would also appear that the community facilities or lack of them are more likely to affect the tenant's desire to move out in suburban projects. It would seem clear that the actual housing unit contributes very little to this desire. However, lack of transportation and shopping can affect the move-out rate in suburban localities. On the other hand the lack of play facilities for children may affect this desire somewhat more in a densely populated site when compared to a more normal density, possibly no matter where the site is located.

In attempting to assess the factors leading to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, several other areas besides the physical accommodation and service facilities were defined. It has been accepted by the Authority that the relationship with its tenants is somewhat different from that of the private landlord to his tenants. Particularly as rent is geared to income in public housing, the Authority has to make itself more aware of the private life of its tenants when compared to the private landlord. Annual inspections of units as required by Government regulations leads to a closer association. On site offices have been established and the project offices have become one of the first places to which tenants turn when they are in some sort of difficulty, particularly if their problem centres around





rent or their neighbours. In fact, because of this close relationship, the Authority has a "Tenant Relations Officer" in each project whose major function is to carry out the annual inspection and interview tenants so that a proper referral can be made to an appropriate social service or other resource in the community.

As pointed out, rent geared to income is basic to the philosophy of subsidized public housing in this country. Rent increases or decreases as the family income increases or decreases. It is, therefore, possible but not likely, for a family to pay twelve different monthly rental rates during one year. This system, while it has many advantages, is different from the way the tenant has paid for his shelter before or after public housing.

The present rental scale used in public housing is geared to a family paying approximately 27% of its income for fully serviced accommodation or about 21 - 22% for shelter only.

In order to ascertain the tenant's reaction to this aspect of public housing, the respondents were asked to evaluate the effect upon their budget of the rent paid. As shelter and services are separated in the rent scale the effect of the service charge was evaluated as well.

TABLE 17: ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC HOUSING RENT SCALE BY PROJECT

PROJECT		EQUITABLE AND REASONABLE	RENT FAIR SERVICE TOO HIGH	NO COMMENT	RENT TOO HIGH FOR RESPONDENT	RENT NOT IN KEEPING WITH PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HOUSING	WORSE SITU- TION THAN BEFORE PUBLIC HOUSING
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	23 39.6	2 3.5	0 0	8 13.8	23 39.6	2 3.5
LA VRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	39 36.2	14 12.9	3 2.8	20 18.5	27 25.0	5 4.6
TOTAL	# %	62 37.3	16 9.6	3 1.8	28 16.9	50 30.2	7 4.2



It must be noted that only 37.3% of the ex-tenants felt that the rent scheme was fair and equitable. Also it appears that about the same percentage pertained for the two projects. On the other hand 34.4% of the families felt that the rent scheme was not in accordance with the purposes of public housing. Of these 4.2% felt that the rent was so high that it led them to a worse financial position than they faced before living in public housing.

In this strong reaction, it is possible that two factors brought about this high degree of dissatisfaction. In the first place, the minimum shelter rent of \$30.00 per month at South Regent Park and \$48.00 per month at Lawrence Heights could force families with little earning power to pay a larger proportion of their income for rent. Secondly, the Authority charges a penalty rent when families exceed the maximum income allowed(\$375.00 per month at South Regent Park and \$450.00 per month at Lawrence Heights). In order to see if these assumptions had some basis in fact the scale used in Table 17 was used for families earning from 0 to \$299.00 per month, and for families earning \$300.00 per month or more by project.

TABLE 18: ATTITUDE TOWARDS RENT SCALE BY INCOME AND PROJECT

ATTITUDE	SOUTH REGENT PARK				LAWRENCE HEIGHTS				TOTAL			
	0-299		300 &		0-299		300 &		0-299		300 &	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Rent Equitable	15	55.5	7	23.3	20	50	18	27.3	35	52.2	25	26.0
Rent Fair - Service Charges High	1	3.75	1	3.85	5	12.5	10	15.1	6	8.9	11	11.5
No Comment	-	-	-	-	1	2.5	1	1.6	1	1.6	1	1.0
Rent Too High For Respondent	2	7.4	6	20.0	7	17.5	13	19.7	9	13.4	19	19.8
Rent Not in Keep- ing with Purpose	8	29.6	15	50.0	5	12.5	21	31.8	13	19.4	36	37.5
Worse Situation Than Before Public Housing	1	3.75	1	3.85	2	5.0	3	4.5	3	4.5	4	4.2
TOTAL	27	100.0	30	100.0	40	100.0	66	100.0	67	100.0	96	100.0
DATA NOT AVAILABLE 1)			1			2					3	

1) Exact financial data not available for these families.



These data clearly indicate that the amount of family income affected the attitude towards the rent scheme. On one hand more than half of the families with incomes under \$299.00 per month were satisfied with the rent scheme while on the other hand, over 60% of the families with incomes over \$300.00 per month expressed some form of dissatisfaction. If one purpose of the rent scale is to place an increasingly burdensome cost upon families as their income increases to the point where they move out, then the present scale seems to achieve this purpose.

However, it should be noted that more than 36% of the families earning under \$299.00 per month were dissatisfied with the rent scale. This dissatisfaction might have been expected to be greater at Lawrence Heights where the minimum shelter rent is \$48.00 per month against South Regent Park where it is \$30.00 per month<sup>(1)</sup> In actuality about 40% of the families earning under \$299.00 per month at South Regent Park expressed dissatisfaction while 35% of this income group from Lawrence Heights expressed the same dissatisfaction. While this 5% differential might not be considered significant in other situations, it appears quite significant here. The validity of a rent scale which adversely affects those families on the bottom of the range should be questioned. It is likely that a reappraisal of the rent to income scale now used in public housing should be made.

In order to estimate the effect of the closer landlord-tenant relationship in public housing mentioned earlier, a measurement was made of the attitude of the respondents to the control exercised by the Authority's staff. This control was defined as being too strict or too lenient and the opinion was graded. In this case it was assumed that no comment indicated no felt impact upon the tenants.

(1) This has since been increased to \$37.50.





lives. The other attitudes were measured by increasing intensity of dissatisfaction.

TABLE 19A: TOO MUCH CONTROL BY HOUSING AUTHORITY BY PROJECT

PROJECT		NO OPINION	NECESSARY INTERFERENCE	ATTITUDE OF STAFF RESENTED	INTERFERENCE WITH PRIVATE LIFE OF TENANT	PUBLIC HOUSING LIKE CONCENTRATION CAMP
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	48 82.7	1 1.7	3 5.2	2 3.5	4 6.9
LAURENCE HEIGHTS	# %	89 82.4	3 2.8	5 4.6	6 5.6	5 4.6
TOTAL	# %	137 82.5	4 2.4	8 4.8	8 4.8	9 5.5

It seems significant that by far the largest percentage of the move-out families (almost 85%) either did not feel enough resentment towards Authority control to say anything or felt that control was necessary. It would appear that this large majority did not feel that their lives were being interfered with to any extent. The remaining 15% were divided almost equally among the other three categories with 5.5% feeling that the control was so strong that life was miserable.

From the Authority's viewpoint these responses should be gratifying although perhaps the dissatisfactions could be reduced to a certain extent if the tenants were made aware of the reasons for the apparent control particularly when the tenants express their resentment.

Finally as regards to Table 19A there seems to be no significant difference in the reactions in both Projects. Indeed the reactions are so similar that it



would appear to reinforce the assumption that some resentment of control is unavoidable in the close staff-tenant relationship existing in public housing.

TABLE 19B: TOO LITTLE CONTROL BY THE AUTHORITY BY PROJECT

PROJECT		NO COMMENT	MORE CONCERN WITH RULES RE CLEANLINESS	MORE CONCERN WITH MORAL BEHAVIOURS	MORAL BEHAVIOUR SHOULD BE CONTROLLED BY FORCE AND INSPECTION	PROJECT SHOULD EVICT OR SEGREGATE FAMILIES WHO DO NOT CONFORM
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	33 56.9	9 15.5	3 5.2	5 8.6	8 13.8
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	71 65.7	16 14.8	7 6.5	4 3.7	10 9.3
TOTAL	# %	104 62.7	25 15.1	10 6.1	9 5.4	18 10.7

The responses elicited in this area indicate for the first time the ex-tenants responses to the social behaviours of the other families in the project. The very strong feeling of slightly more than 10% of the tenants that the Authority should evict or segregate certain other families indicates a degree of feeling of social superiority. Yet this feeling is somewhat stronger in the less upward striving project of South Regent Park. This reaction will be studied closely when the social attitudes of the respondents are examined.

Generally it would appear that the majority of tenants are satisfied or little concerned with lack of control. About 77% of these tenants made no comment or thought that the staff might be a little more strict about the housekeeping standards of other tenants. However, it is interesting to note that while 17.5% of the tenants indicated some concern over excessive control by the Authority, 37.3% indicated some concern over the lack of control.



It seems that a substantial number of the ex-tenants expected the Authority to control the moral behaviour of the other families living in public housing. It is probable that this feeling of lack of control caused some of these people to move. It is also significant that about 45% of the families in South Regent Park expressed some concern while 35% of families in Lawrence Heights expressed the same concern. It is apparent that the behaviour of other families in the downtown project bothered proportionately more move-out families than in the suburban project.

It is possible that the economically poorer families more so than higher income families expected outside agencies to affect their environment even in the public housing community. On the other hand, it might indicate a lesser desire on the part of the staff in Lawrence Heights to interfere in the area of relationship between tenants. It is clear that this study cannot make conclusive statements in this sector of behaviour of public housing tenants and an area for further research seems indicated.

So far we have been discussing the reaction of tenants in areas where the Authority's staff may be appearing to impinge upon the tenant's private life. e.g. relations between husband and wife, anti-social behaviour, etc. As well the Authority has developed a number of rules and regulations which control the tenant's life to some degree. These rules approximate the normal landlord-tenant relationship. This study attempted to measure the reactions of the respondents to the rules and regulations which were "normal" in all rental situations particularly the rental of apartments.





TABLE 20: ATTITUDES TO RULES AND REGULATIONS BY PROJECT

PROJECT		RULES REASONABLE EFFECTIVE AND NOT RESTRICTIVE	RULES REASONABLE DESIGNED FOR EVERYONE'S COMFORT	NO COMMENT	SOME RULES UNNECESSARY OR NOT ENFORCED	RULES TOO STRICT
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	4 6.9	10 17.2	22 37.9	14 24.2	8 13.8
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	8 7.4	16 14.8	52 48.2	20 18.5	12 11.1
TOTAL	# %	12 7.2	26 15.6	74 44.5	34 20.5	20 12.2

It is interesting to note that 38% of the ex-tenants from South Regent Park were dissatisfied with the rules and regulations while only 29.6% of the Lawrence Heights tenants were dissatisfied. Also 37.9% of the respondents from the down-town project made no comment compared to 48.2% of the ex-residents of Lawrence Heights. In this area of rules and regulations and control by Authority staff, the South Regent Park families were more vocal and dissatisfied than those from Lawrence Heights.

It would appear from these data that while the rules and regulations were somewhat more bothersome to these families than the control exerted by the Authority staff in neither case did the majority express dissatisfaction. It is likely that this area did not contribute very much to the desire to move. It is perhaps a little surprising that these families felt that the Authority staff did not intrude upon the private life too much. With the closer landlord-tenant relationship which exists in public housing much more of this feeling might have been expected. However, this judgment is backed up by experience in the United States. The Public Housing Administration in its study "Mobility and Motivations", a survey of families moving from low-rent housing "discovered that moves primarily



due to dissatisfaction with management were proportionately few.<sup>(1)</sup>

The relationship between families, the quarrels that may occur etc., play an important role in delineating the staff's functions. A lot of management's time seems to be spent in dealing with the complaints of families about other families. The attitude of the move-out families towards the rest of the families in the project was searched out in order to ascertain what part if any this attitude played in their leaving the project.

One of the sectors in this area of social judgments in which a response was solicited was the respondent's attitude towards the children of the other families living in the project.

TABLE 21: ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS BY PROJECT

PROJECT		CHILDREN AN ASSET	NO COMMENT	UNAVOIDABLE PROBLEMS NOT FAULT OF PROJECT	TOO MANY CHILDREN TOO MUCH NOISE	CHILD- REN REAL PROBLEM
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	1 1.7	10 17.2	10 17.2	19 32.8	18 31.1
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	10 9.3	31 28.7	21 19.5	35 32.4	11 10.1
TOTAL	# %	11 6.6	41 24.8	31 18.7	54 32.4	29 17.4

(1) Mobility and Motivation - A survey of families moving from low rent housing. Housing and Home Finance Agency, Public Housing Administration; Washington 1958; - Page 55.



This is the first attitude which shows strong dissatisfactions. Over 68% of all respondents had a strong feeling of dissatisfaction in this area. Not at all surprising, is the fact that the more densely child populated South Regent Park affects its ex-residents more adversely as 81.1% of all these respondents show some dissatisfaction and almost 65% showed a strong feeling of dissatisfaction. In Lawrence Heights, the less densely populated project 62% of all the respondents show some dissatisfaction and only 42.5% show strong dissatisfaction.

It might be suspected that the high rise buildings in the downtown project bring about the attitude, but this is not borne out by these data. Slightly more than 72% of all the dissatisfied tenants came from the high-rise apartments compared to the 70.1% of all move-outs represented by the families from the high rise buildings. The difference of 2.2% does not seem significant and this is reinforced by the fact that only 2/3 of all families expressing the strongest dissatisfaction came from the high-rise buildings in this project.

The amount of income earned by the families has no bearing upon this attitude either as the proportions expressing dissatisfaction for those earning less than \$300.00 per month is 61% compared to 62% of those earning more than \$300.00 per month. It would appear then that this strong reaction to other children is a clear indication of the density of child population on the project site. The more children there are per acre the more dissatisfaction there seems to be.

Besides ascertaining the attitude of these families towards the children of other families in the projects, an effort was made to get them to make some social judgments about living in public housing neighbourhoods. These data are based





upon certain judgments made by the research team and are probably the least capable of interpretation. There are no objective criteria concerning these kinds of attitudes in the general population and whether or not the answers of these respondents are abnormal to any degree cannot be judged. However, some conclusions can be reached about the degree to which the public housing neighbourhoods are successful as neighbourhoods in providing friendship and pleasant social interplay to the residents. However, when interpreting these data the fact that these families voluntarily left public housing must be borne in mind. This movement indicates that they were probably less satisfied with public housing living as well as more capable of moving than the families who remained.

TABLE 22: FRIENDS IN THE PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY BY PROJECT

PROJECT		MANY FRIENDS	FRIENDSHIP POSSIBLE WITH MAJORITY OF TENANTS	NO COMMENT	FRIENDSHIP POSSIBLE WITH MAJORITY OF TENANTS	SURFACE ACQUAIN- TANCES	COMPLETE ISOLATION
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	11 19.0	3 5.2	14 24.1	11 19.0	10 17.2	9 15.5
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	28 25.9	15 13.9	9 8.3	23 21.3	21 19.5	12 11.1
TOTAL	# %	39 23.5	18 10.7	23 13.9	34 20.5	31 18.7	21 12.7

Superficially these data seem to indicate that the attitudes in both projects were almost identical particularly if it is assumed that "no comment" means no dissatisfaction. However, if this is assumed to be a completely neutral feeling, it would appear that the ex-tenants from Lawrence Heights were somewhat more satisfied with the friendships they formed than families from South Regent Park. At the extreme other end of the scale a smaller percentage of the families from



Lawrence Heights felt completely isolated from their neighbours.

It is possible that families who have less income and who do not have as strong a desire to better themselves than others even in public housing retain the desire for anonymity longer. The social isolation which can occur in the slum area is carried over into the public housing neighbourhood. Most of the families who expressed a feeling of social isolation "not knowing any of their neighbours" seemed to want it that way. They felt that they wanted "to mind their own business" and not establish friendship with their neighbours as this was something they did not want. To a degree they carry this feeling over to the environment after leaving public housing and these people seem satisfied when nobody "bothers them".

This desire for anonymity seems to be stronger in the downtown, densely, populated section. The "togetherness" of the suburb or new development does not occur.

It is difficult to reach a definite conclusion on these limited data as to whether or not too many families find it difficult to make friends or do not want friendship. Obviously the majority of the ex-tenants felt they did not find adequate friendship in the project. Perhaps a study of those who remain might indicate whether the attitude of these respondents accurately reflects the attitude of public housing residents. However, enough data exists now to conclude that this lack of ability or desire to relate to other people plays a part in making the decision to move.

Most of the opinions expressed about friends in the projects correlated very well with the expressions of a feeling of class consciousness. Strangely enough,



however, of those who expressed dissatisfaction with their friendships in this project, 11 families in Lawrence Heights, and 8 in South Regent Park expressed little or no feelings of class consciousness and moral superiority. All the other families attitudes in both cases correlated very well. These data would seem to reinforce the argument made previously that some families purposely isolate themselves from their neighbours with no degree of feeling of superiority but just because of a strong desire for privacy. It would appear that such families should not be housed in large projects, but rather find their place in such accommodation as now provided by the Province of Ontario's Rent Certificate Plan. What is most surprising is that there are not more of these families.

The attitudes of respondents towards the other people living in the projects were searched out. They were asked in the course of the interview what they thought of the rest of the project population, whether they were "nice" people or people they cared to associate with. Again it must be pointed out that the attitudes of ex-tenants do not fairly represent the attitudes of all residents of public housing.

Criticisms of project society are a way of saying, as some respondents do in fact say in so many words; "we don't belong in the project any more, because we've bettered ourselves and we're above the project "class of people". Free choice move-outs are often made by people "on the move" up the social ladder, and taking pains to disassociate themselves from the rung they have just left behind". (1)

(1) Mobility and Motivation: Page 45.





It would therefore, appear probable that the picture of "class" consciousness as expressed by the ex-tenants reflects the opinions only of those who moved out and not of project tenants generally. As an indicator of why families move it may be important to administration of public housing.

TABLE 23: CONSCIOUSNESS OF "CLASS" DIFFERENCES BY PROJECT

PROJECT		NO CONSCIOUS- NESS OF CLASS DIFFERENCE	NO COMMENT	SOME CONSCIOUS- NESS. ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN PROJECT	FEW NICE PEOPLE MOST NOT RIGHT TYPE	COMPLETE FEEL- ING OF MORAL SUPERIORITY
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	21 36.1	12 20.7	7 12.1	7 12.1	11 19.0
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	26 24.1	20 18.5	25 23.2	21 19.4	16 14.8
TOTAL	# %	47 28.3	32 19.3	32 19.3	28 16.8	27 16.3

In the total group about one-third of the families interviewed showed strong feeling of "class" consciousness and of their own moral superiority. The other families were "not their sort of people" and in fact the feeling often expressed by their group was that the socially inferior families should be segregated, from the "nice" families. Even among the economically "poor" there seems to be a need on the part of many families (52.4%) to feel at least somewhat superior to their neighbours in the public housing community.

Lawrence Heights' ex-tenants appear to be the ones who have more "upward" social drive. When you compare their "class" attitudes, 57.4% of these families feel superior to their neighbours, as against 43.2% of the South Regent Park families.



This attitude of social and moral superiority accounts for a part of the desire to move. On the other hand it does not seem as strong as that found in attitudes towards the children of other families in the project. Again whether the ratio of dissatisfaction is larger in this area than occurs in the rest of society is difficult to decide. However, if only one-third of the voluntary move-out families are strongly conscious of "class" then it would appear that those who remain in the project are probably even less concerned.

The attitude of the ex-tenants to the social environment of the project particularly as this environment pertains to the bringing up of the children was examined. The question is really whether public housing projects are good places to bring up children in the opinion of these families. Again the caution against using these attitudes as representative of the families who remain in the projects has to be made. The feelings of the move-out families should be somewhat stronger than those who remain behind.

TABLE 23: ATTITUDE TOWARDS SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ESPECIALLY AS IT APPLIES TO BRINGING UP CHILDREN BY PROJECT

PROJECT		GOOD ENVIR- ONMENT	ADEQUATE ENVIRONMENT	NO COMMENT	SOME DIS- SATISFACTION	STRONG DIS- SATISFACTION	ABSOLUTE SLUM
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	5 8.6	5 8.6	13 22.4	14 24.1	15 25.9	6 10.4
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	24 22.3	9 8.2	10 9.3	27 25.0	28 25.9	10 9.3
TOTAL	# %	29 17.4	14 8.4	23 13.9	41 24.8	43 25.9	16 9.6



The majority of respondents (60.3%) expressed some dissatisfaction with project social environment. These complaints centred on such things as lack of backyards for apartments and language and misbehaviour of other adults and children. It certainly would appear that this dissatisfaction played a part in bringing these families to move out. It is somewhat disconcerting to find such a large percentage of these families dissatisfied with the social environment created in public housing. It would appear that the easily identified relatively densely populated project was not popular with at least these ex-tenants. On the other hand the move-out rate is not excessive and it is possible that the tenants who stay do not feel this way. It is also possible that they may feel this way but are not financially able to make the move.

Whatever the reason, the strong dissatisfaction with the social environment, which is more pronounced than the feeling of social superiority or the inability to make friends indicates that the social environment created in public housing needs to be improved.

It would not appear that the dissatisfaction in this area is a result of density as was clearly indicated in the attitude towards the children of other families. In fact the degree of dissatisfaction is remarkably the same in both housing projects. It is possible that the easily identifiable project makes certain tenants feel uneasy about the environment thus created.

Whether or not their dissatisfaction is strong enough to make the concept of large projects completely unacceptable is difficult to say. These data indicate this dissatisfaction. Further study into the attitudes of those who stay seems necessary. However, these data do support the Authority's view that large projects



are untenable because of the stigma which applies to them. At least some of this feeling of stigma appears felt by a proportion of public housing tenants.

As these families voluntarily left public housing the question arises what their attitude to it is after their experience. This research project was interested in whether or not they felt that they had been helped financially during their stay in public housing. All the respondents were questioned about the opportunities of saving money and planning for the future while they were in public housing. The following table outlines their reactions:-

TABLE 24: POSSIBILITY OF SAVING AND ADVANCEMENT BY PROJECT

PROJECT		COMPLETE OPP- ORTUNITY FOR SAVING AND ADVANCEMENT	SOLE POSSIBILITY	NO COMMENT	LACK OF POSSI- BILITY. JUST MAINTAIN STAN- DARD LIVING	ONLY MAINTAINED STANDARD LIVING BY GOING INTO DEBT
SOUTH REGENT PARK	# %	12 20.7	10 17.2	16 27.6	16 27.6	4 6.9
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	# %	31 28.7	23 21.3	6 5.5	38 35.2	10 9.3
TOTAL	# %	43 25.9	33 19.9	22 13.3	54 32.5	14 8.4

It is interesting to note that 1.3 out of every 4 ex-tenants felt that they had been able to save money and enhance their chances of buying their own home. On the other hand, slightly less than 10% of the respondents felt that they had gone into debt because of public housing and were worse off than before.

The feeling of dissatisfaction is mostly a reaction to the rent scale which provides that people with larger incomes although they pay the same proportion of their income for rent obviously pay more rent than families on lesser incomes. In





fact one of the purposes of the scale is to get people out of public housing as they approach an income which will permit them to get into the private market. If a normal project distribution was found among families strongly dissatisfied 61.8% of them would be earning more than \$300.00 per month. In fact 71.4% of these families earn more than \$300.00 per month.

At the other end of the income scale families who have to pay the minimum rent can be paying too large a proportion of their income for rent. This accounts for some of the strong dissatisfaction of the families earning under \$299.00 per month as 50% of them were paying the minimum rent. These families are the ones most adversely affected by the rent scale. However, the degree of strong discontent does not appear as great as might be expected.

Generally speaking a majority of the families replying were satisfied with the chance for saving found in public housing. However, a comparison between the projects is made difficult by the number of South Regent Park tenants who did not say anything. If this can be assumed to be a measure of lack of discontent the ex-residents of the Downtown Project were more satisfied than those in the suburban project as 34.5% expressed dissatisfaction in South Regent Park compared to 43.5% in Lawrence Heights. On the other hand 28.7% of the families in Lawrence Heights expressed complete satisfaction compared to South Regent Park's 20.7%

The difference in the measurement of dissatisfaction can be explained in part at least, by the higher minimum(\$48.00) shelter rent in Lawrence Heights as compared to South Regent Park(\$30.00). However, the 60% higher minimum rent did not create a proportionately higher dissatisfaction as expected.



It would seem that public housing is doing a measure of its job of helping people to save and get ahead, at least in the opinion of ex-residents. Those of higher income remember that their rent increased as their income increased until they felt they were paying too much. This too is one of the purposes of public housing, i.e. : to house people who cannot afford to house themselves in the private market prices. In the eyes of the ex-tenant, the high rent they had to pay as their income increased leaves them with a personal feeling of dissatisfaction. But the move-out rates caused by this factor are what public housing is supposed to achieve.

Finally an effort was made to get at the attitudes these families had towards public housing after they left it. They were asked whether or not they would recommend public housing to friends of theirs if these friends were in the same position they were before they moved in. From this direct question the interviewer endeavoured to get a general response towards public housing. The following Table gives the results:-

TABLE 25:- AN ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC HOUSING, BY PROJECT.

PROJECT		PUBLIC HOUSING NECESSARY ON A LARGE SCALE	PUBLIC HOUSING DESIRABLE FOR THOSE WHO CAN NOT PROVIDE FOR THEMSELVES	PUBLIC HOUSING LIMITED TO NEEDFUL FAMILIES	NO PUBLIC HOUSING	NO ANSWER
SOUTH REGENT PARK	#	14	22	6	5	11
	%	24.1	37.9	10.4	8.6	19.0
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	#	48	31	14	12	3
	%	44.5	28.7	12.9	11.1	2.8
TOTAL	#	62	53	20	17	14
	%	37.3	31.9	12.2	10.2	8.4



Because of the large percentage (over 5%) of "No Answers" the ratios were developed only for those persons who responded.

TABLE 25B:- ATTITUDE TOWARDS PUBLIC HOUSING OF ALL FAMILIES WHO RESPONDED, BY PROJECT.

PROJECT		PUBLIC HOUSING NECESSARY ON LARGE SCALE	PUBLIC HOUSING DESIRABLE FOR FAMILIES WHO CAN'T PROVIDE	PUBLIC HOUSING LIMITED TO WELFARE	NO PUBLIC HOUSING
SOUTH REGENCY PARK	%	29.8	46.8	12.8	10.6
LAWRENCE HEIGHTS	%	45.7%	29.5	13.3	11.5
TOTAL	%	40.8	34.9	13.1	11.2

As can be seen the reaction to public housing as a service they would recommend is very much the same in both Projects. Approximately 3 out of every 4 families felt that public housing has a large role to play in housing families. Interestingly enough more ex-tenants from Lawrence Heights felt that it should be provided on a large scale. On the other hand more of the tenants at South Regent Park feel it should be provided for people who cannot provide housing for themselves.

Only one family out of nine felt that there ~~should~~ be no public housing at all. Despite all the various dissatisfactions indicated throughout this study it would appear that only 11.2% of these families came away with a continuing strong dislike for public housing.

In the opinion of the users public housing has helped them at a time of need. By far the largest percentage of these families recognize that public housing has a part in housing Canadian families. If this is true of the voluntary move-outs, it seems most logical to assume that the families who stay in public housing are





generally satisfied and find that it meets their needs.

FAMILIES WHO LEFT PUBLIC HOUSING INVOLUNTARILY.

For the purposes of this study families who left public housing involuntarily include not only those families who were evicted, but also families who "skipped out" without giving proper notice. Generally speaking, the families who left involuntarily did so because of bad rent paying characteristics. Only a small number of these families were evicted for reasons other than non-payment of rent and all of those who "skipped out" did so because of rental arrears.

Because these families left the projects feeling strongly dissatisfied with the administration of public housing, it was realized that they might be hard to interview re their satisfactions and dissatisfactions. However, what became clear after this study began was the very sketchy information the project offices had regarding forwarding addresses, place of employment, etc. It was found that of 87 families only 9 or 10 could be traced. When interviews were attempted, they proved impossible to obtain because of the strong feeling against public housing administration.

Therefore, all that was possible under these circumstances was to use composite pictures of these families i.e., their family composition, source of income, age, etc. in order to see whether or not there was some pattern that emerged.

It is probably safe to say that these families represented a fair proportion of the "troubled" and certainly "troublesome" families in the housing projects. Certain stereotype seem to have grown up over the years about what constitutes a "troubled and/or troublesome" family. Usually they are conceived by the general



public at least, to be families receiving some sort of public assistance on a very low income. Often there is supposed to be a separation or a divorce and the parents are supposed to be young with an unusually large number of children.

Before going into the analysis of the data a description of the Authority's method of giving a family a notice to vacate should be discussed. At no time can the Project Manager evict a family without the decision being subject to review. At the time of the study the Supervisor of Project Management and the Executive Director had to approve any request to evict a family for non-payment of rent or falsification of income return. Usually all possible sources of assistance for the payment were tried before a notice was issued. In the case of a false income return the tenant was given every chance to show he had not deliberately defrauded the Authority.

In the case of eviction for other reasons such as immoral behaviour, the request of the manager to evict was subject not only to General Office Senior Staff review, but automatically, it was placed before the Tenant Relations Committee of the Authority for its decision. This decision was subject to the approval of the Housing Authority. Thus every effort is made to avoid eviction and other avenues are explored before any such action takes place.

Thus the tenants who are evicted do not at any time represent the complete bank of "troubled or troublesome" families in the Project. It is recognized that these families must be helped to help themselves as every eviction is in a sense an admission of failure on the part of public housing administration and policy. The families represented here are those who for one reason or another could not find a place in public housing. These are the families that the public housing policy of 1960-1961 could not help.



The data to be presented in this section will be done so by Project. As explained before, South Regent Park is a downtown redevelopment section project where all families are fully subsidized. Lawrence Heights is a suburban vacant land project where the tenants are only partially subsidized. One other factor which makes for a difference is that South Regent Park contains a number of "priority" families. These families lived on the site in October 1954 prior to demolition and were granted an absolute right of rehousing if they so desired.

One hundred and forty-eight "priority" families were rehoused in South Regent Park being 20.2% of the 732 units. Some of the families were among the families who were evicted or skipped out in the year under study and they are separated out in the following data. As well certain administrative practices differ in the Projects. These affect the interpretation of the data.

#### LAWRENCE HEIGHTS: INVOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS

Of the 173 families who moved out of this project in 1960 - 37 or 21.1% were either evicted or "skipped" out. These families represented 4.5% of the project families. In that year, 24 families were evicted and the remaining 23 "skipped out". If rent arrears was the prime reason for these families leaving the project it would appear that (a) their income was so low that the \$48.00 minimum shelter rent might represent too large a proportion of their income or (b) it was so high that they would be in the position of having to pay a "penalty" rent. There also seems to be the possibility that a variety of individual factors such as debt, illness, etc., affected their rent paying ability to the point that they felt that they just could not pay it.



TABLE 26:- FAMILY INCOME RANGE LAWRENCE HEIGHTS EVICTION & SKIP-OUTS 1960.

INCOME RANGE	EVICTED FAMILIES		SKIP-OUT FAMILIES		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-199	5	20.8	4	17.4	9	19.1
200-249	4	16.7	3	13.1	7	14.9
250-299	6	25.0	5	21.7	11	23.4
300-349	7	29.2	7	30.4	14	29.8
350 &	2	8.3	4	17.4	6	12.8

Of the families who voluntarily moved out of Lawrence Heights nearly 38% earned under \$300.00 per month. On the other hand 57.4% of all the involuntary move-out families earned under \$300.00 per month. On the average, the voluntary move-outs earned \$305.00 per month, which was well above the Project average, the involuntary move-outs had an average family income of \$274.00, well below the project average. This seems to indicate that this category of move-out families has less income and seem less capable of bearing a fixed proportion of its income for rent. Any stress of unusual debt seems likely to put families in a situation where they are unable to meet their ordinary day-to-day payments such as rent, food etc.

According to this table a large proportion of the evicted families were earning under \$300.00 per month when compared to the "skip out" families. In fact 62.5% of the evicted families earned under this figure. This would appear to support the assumption that the lower income brought about rent arrear problems caused by the minimum rent. On the other hand, it would appear that a number of "skip-outs" occurred because of the higher rents that pertained at and beyond the top end of the scale.

As most of these families left because of inability to pay the rents it seems





clear that the present rent to income worked some hardship upon these families at the lower end of the scale. It also served to precipitate a sudden move on the part of some of these families as they approached the maximum income limits and were paying a rent they felt they could not afford.

The low average income of this group of families should indicate that a fair percentage were on some form of public assistance. If not, this group would seem to contain a goodly number of low income self-supporting families.

TABLE 27; SOURCE OF INCOME OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

SOURCE	EVICTED TENANTS		SKIP-OUT TENANTS		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Municipal Welfare	2	8.3	1	4.3	3	6.4
Mothers' Allowance	0	0	2	8.7	2	4.3
Augmented by Public Assistance	2	8.3	2	8.7	4	8.5
Self-Supporting	20	83.4	18	78.3	28	80.8

In the Lawrence Heights Project the number of families wholly or partly on mothers' Allowance and Municipal Welfare has been limited to 15% of all the families in the Project. Ten percent of them are limited to municipal assistance and five percent to Mothers' Allowance. Very rarely has the number of families in these categories been as many as allowed and in 1960 the 15% maximum was not reached. It is interesting to note that 19.2% of all the families who involuntarily left the project were in this category.

On the other hand, by far the large majority of involuntary move-outs were self-supporting families. Of the twenty-seven earning under \$300.00 per month only nine or 1/3 of them were in the public assistance category. The remaining eighteen families represent 38.3% of all involuntary move-outs which seems to



reinforce the concept that the lower income families in public housing are most likely to get into a rent arrear situation as a result of any financial pressure.

This picture comes through even more clearly when only the income of the head of the household is taken into consideration.

TABLE 27:- INCOME OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD - INVOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS

MONTHLY INCOME	EVICTED FAMILIES		SKIP-OUT FAMILIES		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-199	9	37.5	6	26.1	15	31.9
200-249	0	3	1	4.4	1	2.2
250-299	11	45.9	7	30.4	18	38.3
300-349	2	8.3	7	30.4	9	19.1
350	2	8.3	2	8.7	4	8.5

It would appear that the income of the head of the household is substantially less than family income being \$259.00 per month as against the \$274.00 family income. This difference is accounted for largely by the fact that Family Allowances were considered part of income at that time. What is certain is that the heads of these families are definitely in the low income group. It would continue to appear that it is the very low income families who are being evicted or who "skip out" largely because their low income does not allow them any leeway in the present rent geared to income situation.

Earlier we stated that the "stereotyped" families who are a problem (a) are on low income (probably on some form of public assistance) (b) large, with a lot of young children and (c) having parents who probably are not living together. So far it would appear that these families who have caused problems are of low income



and comprise more than an average distribution of those families that receive some sort of public assistance.

AGE

TABLE 28:- AGE OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD INVOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS

AGE RANGE YEARS	EVICTED FAMILIES	SKIP-OUT FAMILIES	TOTAL
	#	#	#
19	0	1	1
20-24	1	1	2
25-29	6	7	13
30-39	10	12	22
40-49	5	1	6
50-59	2	1	3
60-64	-	-	-
65-69	-	-	-
70	-	-	-
AVERAGE AGE	36.2 years	32.5 years	34.2 years

The average age of the head of household is 34.2 years which seems quite low considering that 20% of the housing units in the Project are probably occupied by older persons. What is also significant is the fact that the average age of "skip-out" family heads is nearly 4 years less than the age of evicted family heads. These data would seem to indicate that the families which are troublesome to the administration are young and that the younger troublesome families when they get into rent arrears are more likely to "skip-out" on their obligation than the older families in this category.

Another assumption that might be made is that families with a relatively large number of children can create problems for the administration and if on low income could be more troubled particularly about financial stress. In this area there is little difference between the "skip-out" and evicted families. In both cases the average size family is 5.04 persons and the average number of children is 3.14. The average size of involuntary move-out families is well in excess of





the average size family in Lawrence Heights which is 4.4 persons.

As far as age of children is concerned 48.6% of all children in the involuntary move-out families were five years old and under. This compares to a Project average of 40%. As can be seen, there are more young children in these families than the average of the Project. When comparing evicted families to the average, 52.7% of the children in the evicted families are in the 5 and under category while only 44.4% of the "skip-out" family children are five years old and under. These data seem to indicate that these families contain a large number of very young children with the evicted families having even more young children than the other category. It would appear that these children decrease the ability of the families to move quickly and they are evicted rather than skipping out.

#### MARITAL STATUS

The final aspect to be studied is the marital status. It has been assumed both here and in the United States that "broken" families form a large percentage of families who create problems in public housing. If the assumption that evicted families and "skip-out" families are the ones who create most of the problems for administration is correct, these families should contain a number of separated, divorced or widowed heads.

In fact 40 or 87.2% of these families are "whole" with both husband and wife present. Three have a widowed head, three are led by a separated wife and one by a divorced wife. In this case the stereotype does not seem to hold up, in fact the concept that female-led families contribute a large number of "problem" families seems to be negated. The data are not sufficient to be conclusive, but certainly the very strong indication is that this segment at least of "problem" families



contains a large number of whole families.

From this data it would appear that families who involuntarily move from the Lawrence Heights Project are economically poorer than the average for the Project. They contain more children than the average for the project and it is most likely that both parents will be there. To a large degree this description fits the picture of the kind of family that public housing is built to help. Social reasons caused a minority of these moves and this seems to call for a total community approach to the problems of these families. Housing alone does not seem to help.

#### INVOLUNTARY MOVE-OUTS - SOUTH REGENT PARK

Of the 118 families who moved out of this project in 1960 40 or 33.9% either were evicted or "skipped out". These families represent 5.5% of all project families. It is true as in Lawrence Heights that the large majority of these families left because of rent arrears or difficulty with rental payments. In the period under study 18 families were evicted while 22 families "skipped out".

#### INCOME

TABLE 29: FAMILY INCOME OF EVICTED AND SKIP-OUT FAMILIES 1960

INCOME RANGE PER MONTH	EVICTED FAMILIES		SKIP-OUT FAMILIES		TOTAL	
\$	#	%	#	%	#	%
0 - 199	6	33.3	6	27.3	12	30.0
200 - 249	3	16.7	3	13.6	6	15.0
250 - 299	4	22.2	6	27.3	10	25.0
300 - 349	3	16.7	2	9.1	5	12.5
350	2	11.1	5	22.7	7	17.5

Of the fifty-eight families who voluntarily left the Project twenty-five or 43.1% earned under \$300.00 per month. On the other hand 70.0% of all the involun-



tary move-outs earned under \$300.00 per month. On the average the voluntary move-outs earned \$292.00 per month which is well above the Project average of \$267.00. The involuntary move-out average of \$261.00 per month is below the average family income for the Project as a whole. This reinforces the view that these families are in the lower income segment of the project population.

In South Regent Park unlike Lawrence Heights the proportion of evicted families earning under \$300.00 per month was not significantly larger than the proportion of "skip-out" families earning under \$300.00 per month. The difference between the two categories in Lawrence Heights indicated that the evicted families ran into difficulties with paying the minimum shelter rent of \$48.00 per month. South Regent Park data seems to bear this out as the lower minimum shelter rent of \$30.00 did not place the same pressure on those families at the bottom end of the scale.

On the other hand, the relatively high percentage of the "skip-out" families earning over \$350.00 per month indicates that the pressure of the penalty rent which occurs at \$375.00 per month in South Regent Park caused a number of these families to "flit".

In South Regent Park the rent scale seems to work to get over-income families out of the Project one way or another. However, the fact that a certain number of them "skip-out" when the penalty rent comes due might argue for a different method of application i.e. several months notice so they can find alternative accommodation and leave the Authority having given the proper notice. South Regent Park data also serve to support the conclusion that the rent to income scale is very difficult for the poorer families to carry and inevitably some succumb



to the pressures of other financial obligations and go into debt and are unable to meet the rental payment. To date, public housing in this country has not found a way to assist these families few in number though they may be.

Turning now to the question of how many of these families were on some form of public assistance the following table applies:-

TABLE 30: SOURCE OF INCOME HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

SOURCE	EVICTED FAMILIES		SKIP-OUT FAMILIES		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Municipal Welfare	5	27.8	5	22.7	10	25.0
Mother's Allowance	0	-	2	9.1	2	5.0
Augmented by Public Assistance	-	-	3	13.7	3	7.5
Self-supporting	13	72.2	12	54.5	25	62.5

In South Regent Park the number of families wholly or partly on municipal welfare and Mother's Allowance has been limited to 10% of all project families on municipal welfare and 10% on Mother's Allowance. The 20% has been exceeded by 4 - 6% during most of the life of the Project. However, among the involuntary move-outs, 37.5% of all these families are on these forms of public assistance. It is obvious that families in these categories are more likely to be evicted or to skip out than normal distribution would provide, even recognizing the paucity of the present data.

This picture is true in South Regent Park even where the rent of municipal welfare families is paid direct to the Housing Authority by the Welfare Department of the City of Toronto. This would indicate that the 5 families in this category who were evicted were given notice to vacate because of anti-social behaviour or poor housekeeping. It is also interesting to note that three of these families





were "priority" families and had an absolute right to re-housing. It would appear to be true that a small percentage of the families who came out of "slum" housing could not rehabilitate themselves in the new environment. These families, added to the number of so-called "problem" families that normally accrue in public housing account for a large percentage of the evicted families on municipal welfare.

When comparing the income of the head of family with family income, the average income of the heads is \$235.00 per month, compared with the \$261.00 average for this family. Again it comes through clearly that the very low income families are the ones that find themselves faced with eviction on a proportionately higher ratio than they exist in the Project. The difference between family income and head of household income can be accounted for entirely by Family Allowances which were considered part of family income at that time. The statements made about any economic stress upsetting the equilibrium of these families applies as well to South Regent Park as Lawrence Heights. Although in South Regent Park as at Lawrence Heights other factors than rent arrears seem to play a part both in evictions and skip-outs.

#### AGE OF FAMILY

The average age of the head of the family in all involuntary move-outs was 37.6 years. The average age of all evicted families was 41.7 years and all skip-out families 35.4 years. These are somewhat above average for the Project and are skewed because of the 6 priority families found in the number of evicted. The average age of this group is 48.7 years. With this group removed the average age for involuntary move-out families is reduced to 35.8 years.



It would appear that generally this group of families is somewhat older than the comparable Lawrence Heights group. As well, the skip-out families tend to be younger than the evicted families. When the priority families are removed the difference in age between the two groups disappears. Because of the small sample the priority families have a large effect on the data.

#### SIZE OF FAMILY

The average size family in the group of involuntary move-outs is 5.7 which is somewhat more than the average for all families in the Project, which is 5.4 persons. The average number of children is 3.7 for these families as against 3.5 for the Project. The skip-out families appear smaller and have more children than the evicted group.

The average size family for the evicted group is 5.72 as against 5.63 for the skip-outs, while the number of children is 3.53 for the evicted group as against 3.77 for the skip-out group.

This discrepancy is explained by the presence of the priority families among the evicted group. These families have as many adults (2.65 on the average) as children. It would appear that the priority group among the evicted families is older, has as many adults as children, is of low income and contains a higher percentage of families dependent upon public assistance than is usual even among the involuntary move-out group.

If this group is extracted, the remaining families more nearly fit the stereotype of being young with a lot of children (6.2 children) many of whom are under five years old. These families are of low income, with a somewhat higher than normal distribution of families on public assistance.



When marital status is discussed 34 families or 85% are whole families, 2 or 5% are led by a widowed mother, 4 or 10% by separated women. There are no divorced women heads in the group. Even among the priority group five of the six families have both parents present. It would again appear that this part of the stereotype i.e. troublesome families are likely to be "broken" does not apply.





## CHAPTER VII: FAMILIES WHO REFUSED HOUSING

To the administrators of public housing families in apparent need who refuse housing have always presented somewhat of a mystery. It is difficult to understand why families should refuse an offer of adequate housing at reasonable rental rates. The rate of refusal always serves to confuse any measurement of apparent demand for public housing accommodation. One of the purposes of this study was to interview the families who refused offers of public housing in 1960 and 1961 to see if any pattern resulted from the answers. If such a pattern emerged it was hoped that at least two things would result: (a) an understanding of why some families in need refuse accommodation and (b) a clear enough picture would emerge so that some prognosis of the success of an offer of housing could be made.

The families who absolutely refused offers do not include the very large group of families who completely disappear from the Authority's ken, for a while at least, because they move and do not inform the Authority of their new address. Nor do they include families who contact the Authority to get their name off the waiting list because they have solved their own housing need. The same can also be said of the latter group.

The group under consideration are those families who absolutely refused offers of housing during the years 1960-1961. In other words, the Authority considered their need great enough to make an offer. In fact, in some of these situations as many as three separate offers had been made only to be met by a refusal each time. During the years under discussion the number of families who rejected public housing in this manner numbered 151.



While this may seem a small number of cases, and appear little cause for concern, an understanding of the reasons why families refuse housing and who these families are, is important for a variety of reasons. For one, the Authority feels that the number of families in this category has been on the increase in the past year (1962). Also, although the actual cost of processing an application is not known, it can be assumed to be a considerable amount. Therefore, every refusal represents a certain waste of money which might possibly be avoided if the reasons for refusal were understood.

Seventy-four families, or 47.1% were interviewed. As they were relatively easily found it would seem safe to assume that the sample represents the less mobile families. However, the size of the sample seems large enough to justify assuming that these data are reliable. Therefore, the following conclusion should have some validity.

The total number of persons involved in this group of families was 258, of whom 137 were adults and 121 were children under eighteen years of age. This means that the average size family was 3.5 persons containing 1.8 adults and 1.7 children. This compares with the average size family at 5.4 at South Regent Park containing 3.5 children and 1.9 adults, and the average size family at Lawrence Heights of 4.4 containing 2.6 children and 1.8 adults.

What is obvious from this description and comparison is that the families who refuse housing are likely to be of a smaller size and have substantially less children than those who are housed. In fact, only 15% of all the families who refused contained 6 persons or more. What is also certain is that the ratio of child to adult in the families who refuse is less than 1 to 1 compared to the 3 to 2 ratio at South Regent Park and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 ratio at Lawrence Heights.



From these data it would appear that the smaller families even though in need may turn down an offer of housing. This is probably true because they can more easily solve their need in the private market. Any barrier that may exist in private housing against children would not be as applicable in these cases as in the larger families.

Turning to income, the data are obscured by the fact that seventeen or 22.9% of all the respondents would not divulge this information. Thus income data is based upon a sample of 57 families or 37.7% of the total universe. However, the sample seems large enough to warrant interpretation of the data.

The average income of these families was \$275.00 per month, being somewhat more than the average income for South Regent Park and somewhat less than the average at Lawrence Heights. Of all the families who responded to the income question 37 or 64.9% earned under \$300.00 per month.

From this data it is clear that the majority of the families had incomes low enough to fit into public housing. Because the rent scale used in public housing accrues to the benefit of the larger families to the degree that they pay \$1.00 per month less rent for every child, it would seem reasonable that the seven families who earned more than \$350.00 per year might pay more rent than they felt they should, because of the small size of their families. Without looking further into the matter it is difficult to account for the refusals of the other families on income alone, if it is assumed that the present rent scale extracts a reasonable proportion of the income for rent.





The quality of housing occupied by these families was examined. The following tables indicate the kind of units occupied and the condition of these units:-

TABLE 31: TYPE OF PHYSICAL ACCOMMODATION OCCUPIED BY FAMILIES WHO REFUSED

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>HOUSE</u>	<u>APARTMENT</u>	<u>FLAT</u>	<u>ROOM</u>
Number	17	29	21	7
Percentage	22.9	39.2	28.3	9.6

As by definition neither flats nor rooms have self-contained bathroom facilities and possibly cooking facilities, it must be assumed that the families who occupied these units were inadequately housed. Although no index of overcrowding was used, it would appear likely to assume that at least the 7 families who each occupied a room would appear to be overcrowded. Thus, 37.9% of refusal families were inadequately housed assuming that the 62.1% of these families who occupied houses or apartments occupied units with good physical standards.

Table 32 indicates the physical condition of the units occupied by the respondents at the time of interview:-

TABLE 32: PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ACCOMMODATION OCCUPIED BY FAMILIES WHO REFUSED

<u>RATING</u>	<u>EXCELLENT</u>	<u>GOOD</u>	<u>FAIR</u>	<u>POOR</u>	<u>NOT RATED</u>
Number	8	25	21	15	5
Percentage	10.8	33.8	28.4	20.3	6.7

It is clear that the majority who refuse public housing live in accommodation that is physically less than good. This indicates that not only are the flats and rooms inadequate because of sharing of facilities and overcrowding, but a number of the apartments and houses occupied must be in poor physical shape. It is difficult to understand why 48.7% of all the refusal families elect to remain in poor or at best fair accommodation.





Some of the families have moved since they refused an offer in public housing but nearly half (36) have stayed in the same situation that was deemed inadequate by the Housing Authority when it made its offer. This is significantly the same number as the number of families living in fair or poor accommodation. While the relationship may not be that exact, it would appear safe to assume that many of the families living in excellent and good accommodation moved there after the public housing offer was made. This would lead to the conclusion that some of these families have been able to satisfy their need in the private housing market. The concern must remain about the large number of families who prefer inadequate housing to living in public housing.

The following table indicates the reasons the families gave for refusing the offer. All the reasons total more than 74 as several families gave more than one reason for their refusal of the public housing units:-

TABLE 33: REASONS GIVEN BY RESPONDENT FAMILIES FOR REFUSING PUBLIC HOUSING

	LACK OF TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER FACILITIES	PHYSICAL CONDITION OF UNIT	WRONG TYPE OF UNIT	RULES AND REGULATIONS	RENT	SOCIAL STIGMA	FAMILY REASON
#	25	2	11	9	42	16	9
%	21.9	1.9	9.6	7.9	36.8	14.0	7.9

In descending order of number of answers the reasons for refusal were as follows:- 1) rent; 2) lack of transportation and other facilities; 3) feeling of social stigma; 4) wrong type of unit, i.e. apartment instead of house; 5) rules and regulations, i.e. no pets, etc. 6) family reasons, i.e. could not take brother etc. 7) condition of unit i.e. unit required painting. The first two reasons account for 58.7% of all reasons for refusal.



It is clear that the single largest reason for refusal was the amount of rent that had to be paid in public housing. Most of these families felt that public housing rent should be less than what they paid for their present accommodation, no matter how inadequate that accommodation might be. The fact that they would have to pay more for public housing meant that their budget would be upset by this extra payment. No matter how superior public housing accommodation is when compared to what they already occupy, they feel that their limited income means they could not afford it or else they do not wish to give up other things. These families are quite surprised when low rental public housing does not turn out to have as low a rent as they expect.

As a component of rent which accounted for some of the refusals was the amount of extra payment necessary to get into public housing. Not only is the first month's rent expected in advance, so is a Security Deposit against damage. This, coupled with possibly a deposit for hydro and water, depending upon the municipality in which the housing is located, and moving costs could mean an initial payment well in excess of one hundred dollars. Many of these families felt they could not raise this amount of money and, therefore, they could not afford to move into public housing.

The second largest reason given for refusing public housing centred around the lack of facilities such as transportation. Most public housing families rely on public transportation for their means of getting to and from work or hospital. The fact that such facilities are lacking or are more costly because of the suburban two fares, could mean that they may refuse an offer of public housing. Where offers were made for a specific project almost twice as many families (23) refused Lawrence Heights than South Regent Park (13).



Enough families refused the downtown location for this reason to warrant the assumption that certain families must be located near where they work or in some cases near other facilities which they use. If this is not carried out it can result in refusals. On the other hand, it is another complication in an already complicated tenant selection procedure.

The third reason given for refusal was the social stigma attached to public housing by the rest of the community. As can be seen, it is a poor third well behind the other two reasons. The feeling of stigma does not seem to be attached to a particular project. In fact, where the project offered was known, the same number of families (5) gave this reason for refusing Lawrence Heights as gave it for refusing South Regent Park.

The assumption made on the part of the research group was that this feeling would express itself more against the downtown project than the suburban project. This does not seem to be true. The rejection seems to be of large, easily identified public housing projects, which, according to these families, are looked down upon by their neighbours in the community at large. While the percentage of refusals for this reason does not seem very large, it indicates that such a feeling is prevalent and is standing between some families and their residence in public housing.

The other reasons for refusal are somewhat less important but also more difficult to deal with administratively. The fact that a family desires a house although it consists of only 3 persons, makes it impossible for the Authority which only has two - bedroom apartments and no two - bedroom houses, to satisfy this desire. A wider portfolio of units would be helpful and







here, as well as for those families who prefer anonymity, such a device as the Rent Certificate Plan<sup>(1)</sup> is useful. However, not all family housing desires can be met and a certain number of refusals for this reason can be expected.

The Authority cannot be expected to help families who are unable to accept the application of certain rules such as the prohibition of dogs and cats in apartments. These rules which apply in private as well as public housing are made for the convenience of all the residents and cannot be abrogated for individual cases except in very special circumstances.

What should be done if possible is locating these attitudes beforehand and not making the offer if the applicant feels so strongly that he will not change.

Nor can the Authority expect to help families where for family reasons such as death, disagreement between husband and wife, etc. the offer of housing is refused. It would appear that a certain number of refusals for these reasons will occur no matter what safeguards are adopted.

The final reason for refusal is of such a small order that it can be considered negligible. As long as the Authority staff is certain that the unit is in a clean state and is one into which a family can move with a minimum of clean-up afterwards, such refusals should remain negligible. In the two refusals which occurred this probably masked a desire not to move at all.

(1) The Rent Certificate Plan is at present operated by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority under an agreement with the Province of Ontario. The Authority rents units on the private market paying a fixed negotiated rent and then rents these units to families in need of public housing on a rent geared to income scale.

The first part of the report is a general statement of the purpose of the study. It is to determine the effect of the new method of teaching on the students' understanding of the subject.

The second part of the report is a description of the method used. It is a comparison of the new method with the old method. The new method is based on the principle of learning by doing.

The third part of the report is a description of the results of the study. It shows that the new method has a significant effect on the students' understanding of the subject. The results are based on the data collected from the students' answers to the questions.

The final part of the report is a conclusion. It states that the new method is a better method of teaching than the old method. It is based on the results of the study and the principle of learning by doing.

The study was conducted by the author. It was a comparative study. The results of the study are based on the data collected from the students' answers to the questions.

One other point was made by fifteen of the seventy-four families. These families objected because they could not see the unit. Although they may have boggled at the rent or the lack of transportation, they felt if they could have seen the unit they might have accepted the offer despite their doubts. It would appear sound practice to show families the unit they are going to occupy or failing this, a similar unit. It also suggests that the Authority set aside a demonstration unit where families not only may see the kind of unit they are getting, but how it might be furnished.

To return to the main reason for refusal, it seems that public housing administration should be aware of what the cost of moving is for families. Added to the cost mentioned before is the cost of furnishing the new home. It would appear that means should be devised to instruct the prospective tenant how this may be done reasonably. As well, extra costs such as the Security Deposit might be spread out over a period of time.

Perhaps arrangements can be made with the local Hydro and Water Commissions to spread the cost of necessary deposits over a period of time. This would be helpful not only to families who must refuse because of the amount of the first payment, but to the families who do move in.

The study interested itself in the reactions of these families towards public housing after they had refused accommodation. Interestingly enough, seventeen of these families, or 22.9% reapplied to the Authority for admission into public housing. Either these families were dissatisfied with the solution to their housing problems they found themselves, or else some misunderstanding had occurred at the



time the offer was made. This latter reason argues for a better explanation of how living in public housing will affect the family.

The reactions of these families towards public housing even though they refused accommodation were solicited on the same basis as the reactions of families who voluntarily left the projects.

TABLE 34: ATTITUDES TO PUBLIC HOUSING OF ALL FAMILIES WHO REFUSED

	Public Housing Necessary on Large Scale	Public Housing For Those Who Cannot Provide For Themselves	Public Housing Limited To Families On Welfare	No Public Housing	No Comment
#	31	24	9	7	3
%	41.9	32.5	12.2	9.4	4.0

What should be noted is that 55 families or 74.4% of the total of respondents in this area supported an extensive programme of public housing. Only 16 families, or 21.6% of the total showed some dislike or were absolutely opposed. Their experience did not mean that they felt public housing had no place in the housing programme in this country.

In fact, the strong indication of support coupled with the re-application of some of these families, indicated that these families might move into public housing if some of the circumstances were altered. Some of these cannot be effected by public housing policy but such things as the rent scale, payment of the Security Deposit, kind and size of project, should be studied to avoid refusals from families needing public housing.





## CHAPTER VIII - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

### 1. Basic Premise

The conclusions of this study which deal with the attitudes towards public housing of families who have moved out are affected by the move-out rate which exists in the projects under the administration of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority. If it is considered that these move-out rates are greater than might ordinarily exist in the private rental market, then the data takes on more significance. Conversely, if the move-out rates are considered to be less than the normal private experience, then the data takes on lesser significance. It should be clearly understood that the findings of this study are based essentially on interviews held with those families who have left public housing communities in Metropolitan Toronto.

### 2. Physical Accommodation and Environment

It would appear, based on the evidence supplied by former tenants, that the public housing communities are essentially satisfactory places to live, at least as far as the majority of tenant families are concerned. It would also appear that the housing projects provide a reasonably satisfactory environment for the majority of the families.

The major satisfaction which tends to keep the family in the public housing project centres around the physical accommodation. As families are given housing to meet their requirements physical overcrowding seldom occurs. The larger units provide accommodation which literally cannot be found anywhere else in the Metropolitan Toronto area. The housing unit, particularly the house type, provides the families with their greatest single satisfaction.





### 3. Facilities for Children at Projects

This study indicates little dissatisfaction with the facilities provided for children in the housing projects. What was indicated, however, was the projects which are densely child populated produce an irritation with the children in the project. The tenant apparently feels that he is unable to get away from the children. This probably accounts for the action taken on the part of the Tenants' Association in both projects to get community centres with child oriented programmes.

This unconscious reaction to the large number of children seems a clear indication that projects in the future should not attempt to congregate large numbers of large units in one site as in South Regent Park. A larger proportion of houses to apartments seems necessary.

### 4. Attitude Towards Management

Perhaps it will be surprising, at least to those who administer public housing, that there is a very positive feeling towards the public housing experience of those families who have moved out. Only a very small percentage of this group felt that no housing should be supplied for other families in similar circumstances. More than 90% of the families interviewed felt that some programme of public housing is necessary. The majority of families felt that they had been helped, at least financially, by their public housing experience.

The Housing Authority has for a long time felt that perhaps it interfered too much in the lives of its tenants. This study does not bear out this feeling at all, in fact, there was little expressed dissatisfaction with the control



exerted by the Housing Authority. On the contrary, these families indicated that there was too little control exercised over other families in the community. This group felt that the behaviour of the neighbours should be more strictly supervised. In this latter reaction, however, the expression was by a minority of former residents.

#### 5. Mobility of Public Housing Families

The annual move-out rate for a family in projects under administration is approximately 14%. Such rates are found to be less than that which obtains generally in the private rental market in Canada. More significantly probably is that such rates are less than the move-out rates in public housing in the United States which went as high as 28% in 1954.

While satisfaction with public housing living is possibly the major reason why families stay, it is also likely that the mobility is somewhat restricted by the lack of an alternative choice. The private housing market has been unable to provide this alternative. In order to assess the importance of this lack of an alternative, the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of families remaining in public housing might be studied to determine why they remain in public housing. This might possibly be the next study carried out by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority.

#### 6. Social Welfare Considerations

One rather disconcerting fact appears in this study which seems to suggest further action by the Housing Authority. This is the fact that the evicted families are substantially the kind of families who should be helped by the public housing programme. They are large families with low incomes containing



both parents. For some reason they have not been able to adjust to living in their new environment. Because these families are probably "troubled" or "problem" families, although they represent a very small percentage of the public housing population, it is possible that they require more time and attention than has been given to them up to the present. It would also suggest that greater efforts to rehabilitate these families are necessary. Co-operation with all essential Welfare Agencies should be established so that greater support and assistance can be provided.

#### 7. Rental Scale

In theory the fact that rent is geared to ability to pay should provide a source of satisfaction. The fact that the monthly rent fits the family's income as that income fluctuates has been thought by many experts to provide the families with an excellent form of social and economic security which other families do not have. In theory, therefore, this should be a major source of satisfaction. In practice this expectation is not realized. Generally speaking, there was dissatisfaction expressed on the part of the move-out families with the rental scale. This might have been expected in the upper income ranges where the penalty rent charged in public housing applies. However, many families with very low incomes felt that the rents were too high. This feeling is brought about largely from the establishment of minimum rents, which means that many families are paying too high a proportion of their income in rent.

The real dissatisfaction with the rental scale shows up in those families who refused public housing. They felt that the rents asked by the Authority were not low rental. In fact, when the other move-in charges were added to the first month's rent many families could not afford to move **into** public housing.







This stated dissatisfaction on the part of move-out families and refusal families indicates that the rental scale does not wholly perform its function certainly as it affects the families on very low incomes. Indications are that the establishment of a new scale, updated to family expenditures of the present time, is an absolute necessity. Such a scale if devised should be based upon a dynamic situation and changed on review periodically rather than haphazardly.

#### 8. High-Rise Buildings

This study does not produce damaging evidence against high-rise apartments within itself. In fact dissatisfaction with living in elevator buildings is not expressed to any great extent. The move-out rate from the walk-up apartments in Lawrence Heights is greater than in South Regent Park. This can be accounted for by the fact that 1 and 2-bedroom families in Lawrence Heights find it easier to move out than the 3-bedroom families in South Regent Park. Although high-rise buildings seem to provide greater management and maintenance costs to the administration, the excellent physical layout of the actual dwelling unit appears to outweigh all problems in the minds of the tenants. It should be noted that this evidence is based on families who have moved out and not families who continue to live in the projects.

#### 9. Social Stigma

In general, while there was some dissatisfaction expressed with a variety of social factors these did not seem as great as might be expressed by families who voluntarily moved out of public housing. The social factors do not seem to affect the move-out rate to the same degree as the rent and lack of adequate shopping and transportation facilities. Although there was a slight feeling



of stigma attached to public housing it did not seem to manifest itself in many families. In fact, it is probable that the social reactions expressed by these families are no greater than those that might apply in any neighbourhood.

10. Reasons for Refusal

In descending of importance families in apparent need of housing refused for the following reasons:-

- (1) Rent too high
- (2) Lack of transportation and other facilities
- (3) Feeling of social stigma.
- (4) Wrong type of dwelling i.e. apartment instead of house
- (5) Rules and regulations
- (6) Personal and family reasons
- (7) Condition of unit offered

It is interesting to note that the first two reasons were far and away the most important accounting for nearly 60% of all reasons given.



